

3 1761 06607893 2

ZOROASTRIANISM

in the light of

Hm-e-Kschnoon

A. N. Bharucha

The Bombay Chronicle Press, Bombay-400 001.

ARTS



Presented to the
LIBRARIES *of the*
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

by

Willard G. Oxtoby

EV. 267
*With the compliments
of the author.*



Zoroastrianism

in the light of
Ilm-e-Kshnoom

by

A. N. Bharucha

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

For further copies in No. America, contact

Jal N. Bharucha
66-57 Saunders St.
Rego Park, NY 11374

Author's address:

Khalakdina Terrace B
Gowalia Tank Rd.
Bombay, India 400036

Dedication : To those who believe in God.



"Pe Namay Yezdaan Ahura Mazda Khodai avazuni vereze khoray avaaazyad.

Daadar Ahura Mazda, raio mand, khoraymand Minoan-Mino beraytum beresaad."—(from Hormazd Yest).

In the name of the venerable Ahura Mazda, Lord of Creation, promoter of evolution ; may His lustre increase !

Radiant and lustrous supreme arbiter, incomparable angel of all angels, reach me.

PREFACE

The aim of this little book is to enlighten young Zoroastrians with the knowledge of the religion. It is recited in a prayer on their initiation (Navjote ceremony) that the Mazda-yesna deen is "Majistacha, Voishtacha, Shrestacha" meaning, it is majestic, it is peerless, it is beautiful. Effort is here made to prove the validity of these words.

My affectionate thanks are due to my daughter Nergis J. Cowasji for improving and embellishing many a passage in my work and to my sons Jal and Minoo for devoting their precious time to give their best help, each in his own way. The three of them not only encouraged me but also contributed their mite towards this publication.

I am very much indebted to dear Gool H. Wadia who helped me in this endeavour. Besides correcting some flaws in the book she solved many a problem for me. My heartfelt thanks to her.

I am very grateful to M/s. Noshirwanji and Rustomji Cama and their venerable father, Muncherji, of the Bombay Samachar for their valuable and spontaneous help in publishing this work. Friends whom I hardly meet, but when I do, their affection and friendliness are captivating.

Last, but not the least, I express my gratitude to Dr. Walter Leifer of the Consulate of the Republic of West Germany for permitting me to quote some appreciations by German scholars of Avesta from his book "Bombay and the Germans". These exquisite passages greatly enhance the quality of this work.

A. N. B.

INDEX

	Page
CHAPTER I	1
Spiritual Perception	
(a) Faith	
(b) Devotion	
(c) Religion	
(d) Translation of passage from Gujrati by E. Madon	
(e) Karma and Reincarnation	
(f) Heaven and Hell	
(g) Truth	
(h) "Nature"—a passage by Paul Brunton	
CHAPTER II	8
Pulsating Cosmos	
(a) Ilm-e-Kschnoom	
(b) Behramshaw Shroff	
(c) Creation : Ahunavar : Staote-Yesna	
(d) Two manifestations	
(e) Aatashay Mino-Karko	
(f) Infoldment and Unfoldment	
(g) Ahura-mazda and duality	
(h) The Atmosphere	
(i) Mun-ano aavayed shudan	
CHAPTER III	19
Zoroastrian Hierarchy	
(a) Spenta Mainu and Anghre-mainu	
(b) The Archangels	
(c) Progress of the Soul through the Archangels	
(d) Hamkars	
(e) Archangels with their helpers	

(f) Sarosh Yezed	Page
(g) Mehr Yezed	
CHAPTER IV	27
The Body	
(a) Body and its parts	
(b) Fravashi	
(c) Khoray	
CHAPTER V	30
Avesta	
(a) Avesta language	
(b) Yezmaiday	
(c) Ghes	
CHAPTER VI	34
Translations of Kusti and Sarosh baaj	
(a) Humata, Hukhata, Huvershta	
(b) Ashem Vohu	
(c) Yatha-Ahu-vairyo	
(d) Kemna Mazda	
(e) Ahura Mazda Khodai	
(f) Jasmay avangeyh Mazda	
(g) Sarosh-baaj	
(h) Fravaranay Mazda-Yesna	
(i) Yesnemcha	
(j) Ahmai rascha	
(k) Hazangarem	
(l) Jasmay avangayh (2nd)	
(m) Kerphe Mozda	
(n) Sarosh-ni-Kusti	
(o) Some appreciations	
Play : Zarathustra, Prophet of Iran	55

CHAPTER I

"You need neither art nor science, neither study nor erudition for God realisation ; but Faith, Purity and Devotion".

Faith

To know something that is spiritual requires faith. Spiritual knowledge can only unfold itself if one can strictly believe in certain fundamental truths.

The initial trust that there is a God, an omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent Spirit or Energy to whom all creation owes its birth, is of prime importance.

Faith finds more fertility in a simple mind than in a mind cultivated academically. The latter is very prone to arguments and wants the proof of the pudding before tasting it. A simple mind, meanwhile does not tire of searching a dark room at midnight for a black cat that most seekers feel is not there. Hence faith is the datum and the fundamental on which the spiritual structure is built.

If at every juncture a hurdle is to be crossed with the words, "I can't believe it because I cannot see it, or hear it, or feel it or smell it or taste it", then spiritual facts remain hidden to such a doubting mind.

The five senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste are of carnal origin. They are not given to the pursuit of intellect, much less to that of the spirit.

The mind, in most cases, can only hazily fathom the spiritual world and spiritual development. Yet faith with all its intensity cannot realise that primordial Energy without devotion.

Devotion

"When the disciple is ready the master comes".

Shri Mirdad

Devotion calls for complete concentration of mind and surrender of body and soul, with serenity at heart. It will not tolerate half-heartedness.

Lord Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment ; the second develops from it. Thou shalt love thy neighbour (fellowmen) as thyself".

Prayer is one form of devotion most essential to the laity. Spiritual knowledge is the only science worth acquiring ; the first step to it is prayers.

Prayers with faith and devotion are the open sesame at every step on the path of Righteousness.

It is obligatory for a Zoroastrian to reach God through nature ; to offer devotionals to all God's creation. Hence prayers are offered to the heavenly bodies, to the elements and to the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms. Thus aspiring to reach from Nature to Nature's Creator.

Religion

As this is an exposition of the Zoroastrian faith it is appropriate to translate the word 'religion' into the two ancient languages of Iran, the Avesta and the later Pazend.

Religion in Avesta is called Daena, in Pazend it is Deen. Daena or Deen signifies conscience and character.

Daena is also an angel who presides over man's character. It helps to form a character-picture called Kayrdaar of a being in the atmosphere to depict his thoughts, words and deeds, which in Pazend are known as his Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni.

Kayrdaar is a being's character-picture formed in the sixth plane of the atmosphere, counting from above. It takes a person's life-time to form the Kayrdaar of his thoughts, words and deeds during his sojourn on earth. The beauty or ugliness of this picture becomes the passport to his soul when crossing the Bridge of Judgement i.e. chinvat peraytum, over to the atmospheric world, on the 4th dawn after death, that is on Chahrum-ni-baamdaad.

For a good soul the path widens and the soul crosses over with ease ; but for a sinner it is said to sharpen to a razor's edge, so that the soul soon tumbles over the void.

Bishop Moulton's translation of the 22nd yest (litany) gives a beautiful Kayrdaar of a noble character awaiting the pious soul,

to guide him over the Bridge on the 4th glorious dawn after his death. The verse is cited here.

"Four glorious dawns had risen,
And with the awakening loveliness of day
Came breezes whispering from the Southern sky,
Laden with fragrant sweetness. I beheld,
And floating lightly on the enamoured winds
A presence sped and hovered over me,
A maiden roseate as the blush of morn,
Stately and pure as heaven, and on her face
The freshness of a bloom untouched of Time.
Amazed I cried, 'Who art thou, Maiden fair,
Fairer than aught on earth these eyes have seen ?'
And she in answer spake, "I am thyself,
Thy thoughts, thy words, thy actions, glorified
by every conquest over base desire,
By every offering of a holy prayer
To the wise Lord in Heaven, every deed
Of kindly help done to the good and pure.
By these I come thus lovely, come to guide
Thy steps to the dread Bridge where waits for thee
The Prophet charged with judgement."

- Notes—1. ;Four glorious dawns : Chahrum-ni-bambad ; When the shackles binding one with the earth are broken and the soul advances in the atmospheric world.
2. ;Southern sky : Holds the gateway of heaven called Daadaaray-Gayhaan.
3. ;I beheld : The dead man's soul beheld.
4. ;A Presence : The Kayrdaar in the sixth plane of the atmosphere.

Translation of a passage in Gujarati by E. Madon :

'It is said in the scriptures that a pious man's soul progresses upwards praying, "happiness is to him who brings happiness

unto others"; in Avesta 'Ustaa Ahemai, Yea ahemmai, ustaa-kahammaai chit.'

While the confused soul of a sinner repeats with a heavy heart "Where shall I go and whither shall I turn?" In Avesta "kaam-ne-moi-zaam yae kuthraa-ne moi ayeni," during his upward journey after death.

Karma and Reincarnation

Belief in Karma and Reincarnation is pertinent in oriental philosophy.

Kayshaas is the Iranian word for Karma, which is Sanskrit. Karma means action and also the reward or punishment for all good or bad thoughts, words and deeds in our past lives. Deeds done in the present life will be requitted in the next life.

Reincarnation is the consequence of Karma. All virtues cannot be developed in one lifetime. Thus after the disintegration of the body, the average soul sojourns in the atmospheric world for a certain period of time and enters another womb guided by nature suitable to the development of its Karmic progress. This process repeats itself until the soul attains perfection. Spiritual maturity is gained only at the end of a series of re-births on earth.

God has granted all beings this remedial school of re-birth which eventually liberates the soul from the bonds of matter. His mercy is evident here.

When the soul reaches that pristine condition called "Vahish-taym ahoom ashonim" in Avesta, it leaves this world and its atmosphere for ever, and advances on its blissful journey in the cosmos to meet the Divine.

Reincarnation can well be compared to a school where a child proficient in all subjects can skip a form or two and reach the last rung rapidly. Another child plods along at a slower pace, whilst a dullard who has to repeat classes takes the longest to reach the goal. A student excelling throughout in one subject can be considered a genius although deficient in all other respects. Thus any psychic power does not necessarily bespeak spiritual growth.

Heaven and Hell

Heaven is in Hasti, the Spiritual World. There again the soul has to travel the eight stages after crossing the Daadaaray

gayhaan until it reaches the 9th or the final goal in its pristine condition to become One with the Divine, where its home is.

Hell is Nishti itself, the underworld, where a dark veil of Matter descends on the soul, so that it lives imprisoned in the lure of the flesh. This covering must be removed for the soul to shine again and qualify for its heavenly home.

Jesus Christ said that a man must be borne twice to go to heaven, which should not be taken literally. It means again and again; for when does a man know that the present is his second and last return? He always considers that he has to take re-birth once again.

The oriental word Du-Zuk also has the same implication. Du means twice and Zuk is a contemptuous term for return (pushed).

The Gujarati word zuk or jukh means dhak-ka or dhukela, a contemptuous term for return again and again.

Truth

"Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and saint and heard great argument
About it and about; but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went".

From Omar Khayam
by E. Fitzgerald.

"What is Truth?" asked Pontius Pilate of Jesus Christ; but he did not wait for an answer. Had Jesus a chance to explain, the world would have been a better place to live in.

Gautama Buddha gave up his princely rights and wandered all over the country in search of Truth. After long years of quest he was asked to impart his knowledge to others, and Gautama answered that he could not teach what he did not fully understand himself.

The interpretation of the Tibetan Lama, Lobsang Rampa, who now lives in Canada, is worth mentioning here; that one can realise Truth by one's personal experience. A spoken word or a printed page can only serve as fuel to the workings of one's mind, and turn it away from the lure of the flesh. He elaborates that

Truth is the most elusive thing in the world. It is that state of bliss when peace and serenity rule the mind and heart. It is that stage of bliss which is attained with the cessation of all cravings of the flesh, which are hurdles on the path of Truth. It is that stage of bliss which can be reached through fervent prayers, righteous living and altruism. Altruism is well understood by the following lines of the poet Thomas Grey.

"The tender for another's pain
The unfeeling for his own."

Another profound exposition by the advocate of Ilmay Kschnoon, Ustaad Beheramshaw Shroff, is also enlightening. His essay is in Gujrati, which is here translated.

Truth, as the Zoroastrian scriptures teach us, lies sprawling in the world and in all the cosmos. It is the law and order of Nature itself.

The sun, the moon, and the stars rise and set under a law and order given to them ; and that is their Truth.

The trees and plants sprout and grow and bloom and give fruit at their allotted seasons under a law and order prescribed by Nature, and that is their Truth.

So also all living creatures, the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the beasts of the forest, have the instinct to be guided by their law and order, which is their truth. They have the intuition to do the right thing at the right time.

Only man is left to search and grope for his Truth. He is given reason and choice. He has his conscience to guide him on the path of Truth, his law and order. But alas ! more often his five senses or appetites lead him astray from Truth.

There are some beautiful lines by the poet Robert Browning quoted below, that expound the spark of Truth hidden in the heart of man.

Truth : by Robert Browning.

"Truth is within ourselves ; it takes no rise
From outward things ; whatever you may believe,
There is an inmost centre in us all
Where Truth abides in fullness ; and around

Wall upon wall the gross flesh hems it in,
That perfect clear perception—which is Truth.
A baffling and perverting carnal mesh
Binds it and makes all error ; and to know
Rather consists of opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendour may escape,
Than effecting entry from a light
Supposed to be without."

Nature

Nature is absolute order, ruled by absolute and immutable law laid down at the beginning of the universe by God.

Civilizations, so long as they agree with nature and its laws, such as creation, freedom of growth, the dignity of all that lives, the beauty of form and reverence of the being of God, and their own being, survive.

Once they turn away from these laws, Nature must destroy them. Civilization is man's pathetic attempt to bring order to Nature."

From Paul Brunton
'Search in secret India.'

CHAPTER II

Ilm-e-Kschnoom

Ilm means science or knowledge and kschnoom is bliss. The title means the "Science of Bliss".

This knowledge was brought by a man named Behramshaw Shroff who was guided by adepts to a mountain valley called Demavand-Koh. Demavand is the highest peak in the Elborz mountain range in Iran, and Koh means a mountain valley.

When Iran was conquered by the Arabs, staunch Zoroastrians fled the country in all directions. One such group entered the Elborz mountains in the North and made its home in the Demavand Koh. Here is a life-sketch of the advocate of Ilm-e-Kschnoom.

Behramshaw Shroff 1859-1927

Behramshaw was born in Surat in an Athornan (priestly) family. His father died when he was a school-boy in his teens. The mother was unable to control the bubbling youth and often the day ended with hot words between them. Arguments grew into unpleasant quarrels which resulted in the boy leaving his mother and home in a fit of anger. Not knowing where to turn, he took to the North where his uncle dwelt in far-off Peshawar. After a journey of hardships he reached his destination.

In those days caravans from across the mountains in the North halted to rest on the outskirts of Peshawar. Individuals scattered to barter their goods in Indian cities. Perhaps after weeks they returned to reassemble and wend their way back through the decoit-infested mountains and deserts. Behram's uncle had admonished him to beware of their acquaintance.

One day during his rambles, the boy Behram stopped to do his short ritual of Kusti after a call of nature in sight of the caravan-sarai. A man approached from there with a message from his chieftan, who wanted to see the lad. Behram hesitated, but when the man lifted his robe to show that he was also a Zoroastrian, the youth took courage to follow him.

Rashidji, the chieftan, looked a pious man, with piercing eyes and a glowing face. His talk warmed the boy's heart and he returned every day to imbibe the wonderful spiritual utterances

that poured forth from Rashidji's mouth. Seeing the lad's ardour, the chief offered to take him to Demavand Koh, where he dwelt.

Bahram's uncle not only disapproved of the wild idea, but concocted a story of an urgent message from his dying-mother who wished to see her errant son. This roused the filial emotions in him and he hurried to tell Rashidji of his inability to go with him.

The chief closed his eyes and after a long moment spoke. "It is not true", he said, "to-day is your mother's birthday and after a meal to suit the occasion she sits sewing by the window". Behram remembered that this day and month was the day of her birth and also her wont to sit and sew by the window.

He went home to rebuke his uncle for his piece of deception, who was not only surprised at the mystic's assertion but also yielded to the boy's request to go with the caravan.

This was an arduous and a graphic journey for the youth. As the caravan entered Iran, it gradually thinned, as little groups broke away, each moving towards its own town or village.

Rashidji and his followers entered the Elborz mountains and after a strenuous climb reached the secluded and hidden valley of Demavand. It was a peaceful and picturesque place, the very atmosphere of which was holy, a veritable garden of the Lord! Here men and women led simple lives following the codes of the Zoroastrian religion to the letter and spirit.

Behram was introduced to the adept of the valley who was called Shrosha-Vereze Marzbanji. Shrosha-Vereze is a title meaning "one with the angel Shrosh Yezed"; "that is, in communion with Shrosh Yezed."

Marzbanji, and seventy-one of his disciples are integral souls (khaytavadeth), i.e. they are beyond sex; in them the male and female are spiritually united. They perform rituals or sit in meditations far into the nights. They hardly sleep for an hour or two in twenty-four hours. The population of the vale was limited and maintained at 2,000 men, women and children.

Behram was first cured by the adept of a stammer from which he suffered. He then took elementary spiritual lessons from Tanaz-banoo, and later was referred to Marzbanji for higher studies.

After three and a half years of engrossment in spiritual lore his thoughts turned to his mother and he yearned to see her. Shro-

sha-Vereze knew that this was the limit to his spiritual advancement in this life. He told the lad that this knowledge was given to him in reward of a selfless deed in his past life, when Marzbanji was a high official and Behram a soldier who saved the official's life at the risk of his own. For his long journey home he was given some knowledge of alchemy, how to transmute baser metals into gold, only for his necessary requirements on the way.

Before his departure he was warned not to divulge this knowledge to his community for, as it was not ripe enough to digest it, he would only meet with opposition and ridicule. He was then blind-folded, so as not to return or send others to the hidden valley and was guided to the trunk-road from which point Behramsha was left to find his lone way.

Behramsha came home through Tibet, where his mind was enriched by the discussions he had with the holy lamas of that country. In Surat again, he passed almost twenty years more like a recluse.

One Behram-roze, after his devotions in the Atash-Behram his curiosity got the better of him, so he stopped in the hall to listen to a monthly lecture given to Athornan boys by a community-father from Bombay.

It was on "Atash" (fire). As he perceived the short-comings of the subject, his eagerness to interrupt, again took the better of him and he stood up to ask "But do you know how many kinds of fires there are?" and answered the surprised silence himself, "There are sixteen kinds of fires." He was given the chair to expound the subject; which he did with lucidity.

The lecturer returned to Bombay to extol Behramsha's worth as a religious exponent and there was a clamour to bring him to light. Behramsha was adamant for he did not wish to pollute his Khoray (aura) coming in contact with lesser beings during his journeys to Bombay by train. Also he was not sure if the community was mature enough to digest this knowledge. However the community heads prevailed upon him and he often journeyed to Bombay to give lectures.

His expositions solved many a problem and brought out the essence and spirit of the religion. He took the Gujarati press by storm. But, and there was a big "but" when he asked to revive

some old customs, such as that men and women must always have their heads covered, and women must segregate themselves during their monthly periods, there was a loud protest. The elite had striven hard for 50 years to eliminate such embarrassing practices. Should they fall back again? No. He also spoke of Najrana i.e., offering the tenth part of one's income to the Guru, which the people mistook for greed for money. There were other minor points on which many differed. This brought about a rift in the community, to the discredit of the advocate of Ilm-e-Ksch-noom.

Nevertheless Behramsha transfused spirit and vitality into the bone-dry philological translations of the Avesta, so that the grateful community has sort of canonized him and his remembrance is kept fresh in all ceremonies of dedication (afringans) as "Anoshayh ravan ravani Osta Behramsha Osta Navroze Aider yaad baad." He is also known among his followers as Oostad Sahib Behramsha.

Anosheh ravan means the soul whose atoms have been dis-integrated. Ano means atom.

Creation, Ahunavar and Staote

Ahu is God in the highest, not to be confused with Ahura-Mazda. In the beginning was Ahu. He always is, always was and always will be. Almighty Ahu is everywhere, knows everything, sees everything and is all powerful. He is One, without duality or quality.

Zarvan means Time and Zarvanay-Akernay is endless Time. It has no beginning and no end. It is like a circle, eternity. Arsho-takht is space, and it also is without beginning or end.

Garothman or Garodeman is Ahu's abode in the highest i.e. the 9th heaven.

Ahu had a feeling of boredom. He thought 'One am I, let me be many.' In Sanskrit 'Eco ham, bahu so-ham.'

To gratify his wish Ahu uttered a mighty Word. In Avesta called Ahun or Ahunavar meaning Ahu's Word. This Word was not only a tremendous thunderous sound beyond man's ken; it was an emanation that projected a part of Ahu Himself. A spirit of His Spirit, a living and a knowing Word.

To quote the Bible "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Philo the Greek philosopher calls it Logos, the creative instrument of God. One with the Father.

The Hindus call it Aum. A most beautiful sound. It has the vibrations of a fully sonorous gong that swells heavenwards.

This abyss-filling Word Ahunavar caused vibrations in Arshotakhi and Zarvanay Akernay i.e. in space and eternity. With the vibrations shone a lustre and with the lustre came colour and form. These colourful patterns in space and eternity gave birth to the whole creation; and behold the Cosmos.

The above plan of Creation is called Staote-Yesna in Avesta language. It is the making or weaving of colourful patterns in Cosmos. Staote means sound-vibrations, bringing colour and forms. Yesna is ceremony.

A good illustration for the understanding of this scheme would be the movie 'Fantasia' by Walt Disney. It is an idea which comes closest to the concept of Staote-Yesna, the idea of sound-vibrations being the source or fountain-head of the entire Cosmic Creation.

A cord steps out on the cinema screen, hesitatingly bending and bowing like a bashful maiden. It comes to the centre of the screen and stands upright. A hand comes over and deftly plucks it; and the cord vibrates with the resonance of a G-string, that sends out colourful geometrical patterns all round it quivering alive. It then gently fades and tremblingly resumes its lone position. It is fantastic! Fantastic but true to imagine that the universe came alive with sound and vibrations projecting colourful forms. The scene is changed and

"The heavens proclaim the glory of God

And the firmament sheweth His handiwork."—Snowden

The chaotic turbulence of the elements on earth is displayed with storms and conflicts in the universe. It then gradually subsides (in fact after eons of Time) into a passive and orderly scheme of things, to evolve into the present as we know it. Colours and forms and ultimately finite entities born out of the heavenly sound Ahunavar, (how better could it be expressed than with Bach's

music?) are brilliantly and graphically portrayed by the genius of Walt Disney.

Thus Creation was born some multi-millions of years ago and thus it continues every day, nay every minute. For creation is birth, life and death.

The Hindus present God in three aspects.

1. Brahma the Creator gives birth.
2. Vishnu the Preserver sustains life.
3. Shiva the Destroyer brings death.

This cycle of birth, life and death will continue till the 'Divine Purpose' is fulfilled.

The Bible says that God made the Universe and all life in it in six days. It is erroneous to believe that all this happened in six earthly days of 24 hours each. It is more likely that Creation and all life on earth was made in six Cosmic stages. Each Cosmic day measures to thousands of earthly days. Only in this way can it synchronize with science from era to era.

The Two Manifestations

Ilm-e-Kshnoom tells us of the two Manifestations of Creation.

The first manifestation gave birth to the Heavenly and Planetary worlds. These two comprise the world of spirits. They are called Hasti, i.e. Reality.

The second Manifestation is the continuation of the spiritual worlds of Hasti. It gave birth to matter. This manifestation includes our atmospheric world which is subtle; and the physical world, the Earth, where matter abounds in fullness. These two are called Nishti, i.e., the illusory worlds.

The Fire Called Atashay-Mino-Karko

Ilm-e-Kshnoom introduces sixteen kinds of fire to us. They are graded and cover in their functions the worlds of Spirit and Matter, of Hasti and of Nishti. They are all mentioned in Atashni-Nyas.

The top-most fire is Atashay Ahuray Mazdao Puthra, the son of Ahura Mazda. It works in the highest heaven. From the lowest upwards different fires work in the mineral, vegetable animal and human kingdoms respectively, in the form of heat.

Atashay Mino Karko functions between Hasti and Nishti, that is between the world of spirit and the world of matter. It is from this plane that the Integral soul splits into fragments in its descent into the world of matter.

Infoldment And Unfoldment

The Integral Soul on entering the plane of Atashay-Mino-Karko gradually thickens to form matter. It also splits into Male and Female fragments; the lesser bits falling into mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, all taking forms. Thus the soul has its allotted portions in all nature.

During the fragments' further downward journey the souls take up layers and layers of matter until they assume bodys at the lowest plane on earth in the mineral and vegetable kingdoms; and are covered with flesh and blood in the animal and human kingdoms. This downward process is called Infoldment.

The pre-Zoroastrian Mazda-Yesna religion taught of this process in all Nature, and its followers worshipped Mazda the God of Life and Matter. Ahura the God of Spirit was not yet recognized.

Then came Zoroathushtra to teach man of the upward journey of the soul, back from Nishti into Hasti, or the return journey from the world of matter into the world of spirit. This upward process is called Unfoldment. It is the subconscious urge of every ignorant, groping, fumbling soul, as much as the aim of any more enlightened one.

In this arduous task the soul which had split up in its downward journey is constantly seeking its true counterpart. Hence the attraction between the male and the female. Not until a marriage is spiritually consummated can it be said to be 'made in Heaven'. The male and female souls retain their genders in all rebirths until they become integral. In its evolution through many rebirths the soul also gathers its lesser fragments from the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdom through love and affinity, until it arrives on the threshold of the spiritual, from whence it continues in the spiritual world.

During the soul's upward progress the grossness of matter is gradually dissolved until it again attains its integral pristine condi-

tion called Vahistaym Ahum Ashaunim, (in Ahmai Rascha) the most refined condition, to be 'en rapport' with God in the Highest. This progress takes many life-times.

Mazda-Yesna Deen taught of Infoldment only. Mazda Yesna Zarathoshti Deen teaches of both Infoldment and Unfoldment of the soul.

The great poet Tennyson understood well
"The far off purpose divine
To which the whole creation moves".

His lines clarify that not only individuals but whole nations of high spiritual values, the whole world, all constellations, the universe move towards this effulgent end of Eternal Light, in Avesta called 'Angre-Rochao', from which the universe was once projected.

Following are lines from a speech of Jagdish Chandra Bose, the great Bengali scientist at the inauguration of the Bose institute of Calcutta.

"A universal reaction seemed to bring metal, plant and animal under a common law. They all exhibit essentially the same phenomena of fatigue and depression with possibilities of recovery and of exaltation as well as the permanent irresponsiveness associated with death".

Ahura-Mazda & Duality

As mentioned in the chapter of Creation, Ahu the God in the highest (9th heaven) is the only Being without duality or quality. He is One.

Ahura is that which is of Ahu. He is the God of spirit, Mazda is the God of Life and Matter. Ahura plus Mazda is the Lord of Spirit and Matter. It is the male and female creative principle as of the Hindus Purusha (spirit) and Prakruti (matter) i.e. that which is manifest).

To maintain Creation which happens every minute, the duality of male and female, of Positive and negative, of Purusha and Prakruti, of Spirit and matter is necessary. Without the two functioning together or in complement, results are not possible.

Some philosophers have erroneously called Zarathushtra a dualist. They interpreted that he believed in two Gods, the good the God

Ahura-Mazda and the evil God Ahriman. This is incorrect. Oneness remains only with Ahu the Almighty. After Him comes duality as Spirit and Matter, Positive and Negative. Purusha and Prakruti, male and female. One is as necessary as the other to maintain Creation.

Good and evil are wrongly applied to duality. Evil belongs to the appetites of the flesh; it is to be shed for man to evolve into an exalted and refined soul. It is the grossness attached to the spirit like a film of dust on a lamp which can only shine when the layer of dust is removed.

Zarathushtra believed in One God but there is no denying that duality comes after Him.

The Atmosphere

The Earth is enveloped in a subtle covering generally termed the atmosphere. It is composed of several layers.

Science has given us all their names. They are from the top-most; Exosphere, Ionosphere, Chemosphere, Stratosphere and Troposphere. Each layer has its own characteristics. Chemosphere and Ionosphere have a sub-division each.

Avesta gives us the names of seven such layers which comprise the subtle world of Nishti. The last or the seventh layer begins immediately above the gross physical world we live in. The names of these seven coverings are given in the Mehr-ni-nyas beginning from the top-most.

1. Mithraym Ayvi Dakheum
2. Mithraym Anterai Dakheum
3. Mithraym Aa Dakheum
4. Mithraym Oopaiyri Dakheum
5. Mithraym Adaiyri Dakheum
6. Mithraym Paiyri Dakheum
7. Mithraym Aypi Dakheum

These layers are not just space filled with air, but act as repositories of energies, good, bad and mischievous. In these coverings are the subtle sources of the physical elements of fire, air, earth and water.

Within these layers there are also places where reside the souls of our dead. These are spheres or centres which actually

form temporary bases for migratory souls who are subjected to the discipline of rebirths until they are refined enough to leave the world of Nishti and qualify for the world of Hashti. These centres are known as Haphta Keshwar. Haphta means seven and Keshwar means sphere or globe. They are situated in different directions upon the layers, which means at different compass points. Six of these are subtle and the seventh is the physical Earth itself, the Keshwar of matter to which the soul returns repeatedly.

Prior to Ilm-e-Kschnoom, Avesta scholars interpreted that the Haphta-Keshwars are seven continents on Earth. But those who believe in reincarnation understand that souls who leave their physical bodies sojourn somewhere out of this material world; to them the theory of continents is inappropriate.

Here are given the names of the Haphta-Keshwars with their directions, beginning from the upper-most in the atmosphere.

Keshwars and their Directions

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Vidat-Fashoo | South-east corner |
| 2. Fradat-Fashoo | South-west corner |
| 3. Sevehi | East |
| 4. Arezhi | West |
| 5. Vowroo-Zerayshti | North-east corner |
| 6. Vowroo-berayshti | North-west corner |
| 7. Khenireth-baami | The Earth |

Having now understood the theological structure one can better trace the journey of a soul in its process of Unfoldment. The average soul is liable to rebirth, and after each sojourn on earth, is allotted its place in one of the six Keshwars according to its Karma. The more refined the soul, the higher the place it occupies. After it has been through the grinding discipline of rebirths on earth, it further progresses towards the Southern skies through the so-called gateway of the spiritual world i.e. Daaddaaray-Gayhan of the Avesta. From here it enters the world of Hashti, when it is freed from the obligations of repeated births on earth.

This cycle of rebirths upon the earth explains the theory of re-incarnation, put forward by the Zoroastrian religion.

Mun Aano Aavayed Shudan. (I also wish to go there)

At the end of every litany of Avesta prayers, are the words uttered three times: "mun aano aavayed shudan," meaning

"I also wish to go there." The question then arises. Where is it that I desire to go so avidly that I repeat it at the end of almost every prayer?

After these lines, are always those, that pay a tribute to the South, called Daadaaray-Gayhaan, which translated means "Gateway to the Spiritual World".

If we look at the map of the world we find that the bulk of land masses lie in the Northern hemisphere. Ilm-e-Kschnoon tells us that the North Terrestrial Pole has the magnetism that attracts the soil towards it. Consequently human life is predominant in that region more than in the Southern hemisphere, which has a greater proportion of water.

With the density of human life go human pollutions of every kind, physical and mental, materialistic values, mundane thoughts, base desires and a million other vices that shackle man to his earthly existence. Taken as a whole they form very low-grade character-pictures or Kayrdaars in the northern hemisphere. Prayers directed towards an area of such pollution lose their potential to a great extent.

This may sound far-fetched, but it should not be difficult to believe in the light of recent scientific research in the field of sound and thought vibrations.

The south on the other hand is mainly surrounded by wide oceans where human life and thoughts are scarce. There the atmosphere is relatively purer and is identified with the Spirit, and Kayrdaars of more advanced souls are gathered there. Prayers offered toward the South retain their full spiritual potential, and help to form good character-pictures. Hence the tribute to the South and the wide waters that prevail there, at the end of every prayer, and a fervent wish of the soul to go there and mingle in their purity. Therefore Zoroastrian prayers are advised to be said facing the south in the absence of the Sun or when the Sun is in the Zenith.

CHAPTER III

Spenta Mainu and Angra Mainu

Duality begins with the twins Spenta-Mainu and Angra-Mainu. They were born in the beginning of Creation. They are inseparable but possess opposite characteristics. As they are both Minos (angels) they are equal in God's estimation.

Spenta has awareness (knowledge) and progressive attributes, while Angra is in darkness through ignorance. He always opposes Spenta's good activities. Yet both are indispensable for the regulation of human affairs.

Without Angra, Spenta would be practically inert, for there would be no reason or urge for progress. As without evil, good would have no meaning or recognition and the moving force of evolution would fail.

Man commits sin because of his ignorance of the Divine Spark in him when that is kindled he gradually becomes aware of his liberation from matter.

The Archangels

The Avesta has introduced to us seven Archangels, called the Haphta Amayshaa-Spaystaas. They were among the first spirits to take birth. Each is bestowed with an attribute of God Himself and each is allotted particular functions in Hasti and Nishti.

The following passage from "Zoroastrianism" by J. Waterhouse would be appropriate to quote here.

"After the Greek Logos i.e. (The Word), there were Logis, who also are associated with the Angels of God, and several of these partake of the work of the Zoroastrian Amayshaa-Spayntaas. They are not separated from God, but fill the world with His presence and keep it in harmonious relationship."

There are other angels of different grades who help the Archangels. They are called Hamkaars.

The names of the seven Archangels (Haphta Amayshaa-Spayntaas) are given here with their functions, in two languages the ancient Avesta and the later Pazend.

Avesta	Pazend
1. Ahura Mazda	Daadaar Ahura-Mazda

He is a dual character. Ahura is the God of Spirit and Mazda is the God of Matter. He presides over all human beings.

2. Vohu Mannangha Behman Amshaaspand

Vohu is good and mannangha means mind. He is of good mind and gives Divine knowledge. He presides over the animal kingdom. He is the caretaker of the five domestic animals Panjay-Goshpand, of which the cow and the ox are of the highest order. They give milk and till the land respectively. By nature they are selfless. The other four are the horse, the camel, the lamb and the dog.

3. Asha-Vahishta Ardibehst-Amshaaspand

Asha : Truth, purity Vahishta : best.

He leads man to the path of Truth (Ashoi) ; and connotes purity. He presides over fire.

4. Kschtra-Vairya Sherevar Amshaaspand

Kschtra : power. Vairya : righteous.

God granted this power to ancient Kings as their Divine right to rule. They were not only temporal rulers but also spiritual heads of their kingdoms. Their downfall was brought about by the abuse of this righteous power. This power called 'Grace' is also bestowed upon spiritually advanced souls. He presides over the mineral kingdom.

5. Spenta Aarmaity Spendaarmad Amshaaspand

This and the next two are female spirits, Spenta Aarmaity teaches the tender virtues of Devotion, Humbleness and Surrender. She presides over the soil i.e. earth.

6. Hauravataat Khordaad Amshaaspand

She gives health and perfection to body and spirit. She presides over water.

7. Ameretaat Amerdaad Amshaaspand

She brings Immortality after perfection. That is when the soul is released from rebirth on earth and enters the spiritual world.

She presides over the vegetable kingdom. Hauravataat and Ameretaat are generally coupled together as health and perfection bring immortality. A very good passage in Gujrati is given here, to understand the workings of these six attributes in human hearts, to cultivate their spiritual progress.

Progress of the soul through the Archangels

According to the teachings of the Zoroastrian religion, a soul in its development towards ultimate perfection, is aided, guided and protected by Ahuramazda and his six main attributes, which human concept accepts as Archangels or Amshaaspands. These energies function in a progressive sequence ; and their inter-play steers the soul in its arduous and hazardous progress to its finality. Let it be said here that an individual who single-mindedly and purposefully seeks the help of these forces, literally activates them multi-fold, in helping him climb the spiritual ladder to perfection.

These six attributes of Ahuramazda can be understood as follows : Behman Amshaaspand or Vohu Mannangha is the Good Mind ; the basic prerequisite for any kind of spiritual development. Through him a man endeavours to make his mind pure and as a consequence of this mental cleansing, acquires spiritual knowledge. Having gained spiritual knowledge, Ardibehst Amshaaspand or Asha Vahista helps him to live up to it along the difficult path of Truth and Purity. Living a life of Truth and Purity combined with spiritual knowledge qualifies the man for Grace. This Divine Grace is Sherayvar Amshaaspand or Kschtra-Vairya through whom man can achieve mighty deeds employing his spiritual strength. But this holy gift of Grace carries a hazard with it, the danger of pride and arrogance, which might bring about his downfall. A classic example of this in Iranian history is Emperor Jamshed who fell from his pinnacle of Grace through this sin. To guard man against this disaster the Zoroastrian creed places Spendaarmad Amshaaspand or Spenta-Aarmaity who bestows the tender virtues of humility, devotion and surrender. The quality of humbleness cannot be stressed enough ; as pride has often proved a stumbling block to one who has attained the height of Spiritual Grace.

However, even at this stage of development a soul still has to climb further to health and Perfection where he is helped by Khordaad Amshaaspand or Hauravataat which is Perfection itself.

Through Perfection the soul gains the final reward of Amerdaad Amshaaspand or Ameraytaat which is Immortality, when it merges with the Infinite from whence it was born.

Hamkaars — (Helpers)

There are innumerable helpers to the Cabinet of the seven Archangels. The chief ones are incorporated in the 12 months of the year as well as in the 30 days of the month.

The first seven days of each month are named after the Archangels and the rest with the names of the Hamkaars. The Hamkaars are graded as below although they do not occur in the same order in the Calendar.

1. The seven Archangels	7
2. The five Minos	5
3. The three Daes	3
4. The one Far-rokh	1
5. The fourteen Yezeds	14
	<hr/>
	30 days

There are three extra Yezeds namely Deham, Haom and Burzo. It is best to learn by heart the names of the 30 days of the month and the 12 months in Avesta and Pazend; for thus the prayers are better understood. As most prayer books give only the names in Pazend they are given here in the two languages.

Avesta	Pazend
1. Ahura-Mazda	Daadaar-Ahuramazda
2. Vohu-Mannangha	Behman-Amshaaspand
3. Asha-Vahista	Ardibehst-Amshaaspand
4. Kschtra-Vairya	Sherayvar-Amshaaspand
5. Spenta-Aarimaity	Spendaarmad-Amshaaspand
6. Hauravataat	Khordaad-Amshaaspand
7. Ameraytaat	Amerdaad-Amshaaspand
8. Dathoosh-ooop-Aatar	Dae-dae-pe-aadar-daadaar
9. Aatar	Aadar-Yezed
10. Aapp	Aavan-Yezed
11. Havare-kschayte	Khorshed Yezed
12. Maahaunghay	Mohr Yezed

Avesta	Pazend
13. Teestra	Teer Yezed
14. Gayush-urvaan	Gosh Yezed
15. Dathoosh-ooop-Mithra	Dae-Dae-pe-Mehr-daadaar
16. Mithra	Mehr-Yezed
17. Shraush	Sarosh Yezed
18. Rashnu	Rashnay-Raste-Yezed
19. Fravashi; Ardaafravash	Farrokh-Farfardin
20. Verethra-ghna	Behram-Yezed
21. Raman	Mino Ram
22. Vaat	Govaad Yezed
23. Dathoosh-ooop-Daena	Dae-dae-pe-din-daadaar
24. Daena	Deen Yezed
25. Ashish-Vangheh	Mino Arsi-savangha
26. Arshtad	Arstad Yezed
27. Asmn	Mino-Asman
28. Jaym-Hudaungh	Jamyad-Yezed
29. Manthra-Spenta	Mino Maarayspand
30. Anghre-Rauchao	Mino Annayraan

Name of the 12 months

1. Fravashi	Farrokh Farvardin
2. Asha-Vahishta	Ardibehst Amshaaspand
3. Hauravataat	Khordaad Amshaaspand
4. Teestra	Teer Yezed
5. Ameraytaat	Amerdaad-Amshaaspand
6. Kschatra-Vairya	Sherayvar Amshaaspand
7. Mithra	Mehr Yezed
8. Aapp	Aavan Yezed
9. Aatar	Aadar Yezed
10. Datoosh	Dae-daadaar
11. Vohu-Mannangha	Behman Amshaaspand
12. Spenta Armaiti	Spayndarmad Amshaaspand

All the months are of 30 days each, which make $30 \times 12 = 360$ days in the year. Five extra days called Gathas are added to the last month of the year making 365 days. These 5 Gathas are auspicious days; on these days the beloved dead are remembered every day with rites.

Unfortunately, the Parsis when they came to India forgot the leap year called "Avardad Sal"—and so the calendar falls behind a day every four years.

Avardad Saal is not to be confused with Amardad Saal. It was celebrated every four years with feasts, in which the Shah and all his subjects took part as equals.

The Seven Archangels with their Helpers

1. Ahura-Mazda : Dae-pe-aadar ; Dae-pe Mayhr ; Dae-pe-deen.
2. Behman Amshaaspand : Mohr ; Gosh ; Raam.
3. Ardibayst Amshaaspand : Aadar ; Sarosh ; Behram.
4. Sherayvar Amshaaspand : Khorshed ; Mehr ; Aasmaan ; Annayraan.
5. Asphend armad Amshaaspand : Aavan, Deen ; Ashisavangha, Maarayspand.
6. Khordad Amshaaspand : Teer ; Govad ; Farverdin.
7. Amerdad Amshaaspand : Rashna ; Aastad ; Jamyad.

Sarosh Yezed

Sarosh Yezed is an angel of the 5th grade. He is the hamkaar (helper) of Ardibayst Amshaaspand. He is the immediate and constant care-taker of all human beings right from their birth until the 4th dawn after death, when he leads the soul to the Chinvat payraytum i.e., the Bridge of Judgement ; until then he is the comfort and protector of the Soul. Every day till the end of the 4th dawn after death prayers are offered to this angel to invoke his help to the spirit of the dead.

A Zoroastrian's first daily prayer of Kusti is offered to Sarosh Yezed. It is called Sarosh-ni-kusti. The next prayer Sarosh-baaj is also in praise of this angel. The 5 Yathas and 3 Ashems are an invocation to Sarosh. Whenever a Zoroastrian is faced with a difficult undertaking or wishes to free himself from an entangling situation, he calls to Sarosh for help by reciting 5 Yathas and 3 Ashems ; it is the natural impulse in every Zoroastrian to utter them.

Avesta says of Sarosh Yezed that his body is called 'Takhmay tanu manthra', which means that his body is made up of manthra. This philological translation is incomprehensible. Kschnoom

provides a convincing explanation, that Sarosh Yezed's conscience is so acutely sensitive that it captures all manthra-staotes i.e., manthra-vibrations and integrates them into his body.

Kschnoom compares this process with a photographic film which captures the perfect impression of an object in a split second when exposed to proper light-vibrations.

Another term in the angel's praise is "Tagi tan firmaan, Shekafte djinn, djinn awzaar." It means that Sarosh Yezed is exclusively ordained with an energy called Tagi which becomes the weapon to vanquish all evil that impedes a man's spiritual progress.

Mithra or Mehr Yezed

Mithra or Mehr Yezed is the presiding angel over the atmosphere, the element most essential to life on earth. More essential than the other elements fire, earth and water. To say that it was not recognised as such by the ancients would not be correct.

In the Avesta, Mehr-ni-nyais is an associate of the Khorshed-ni-nyais. It is given the dignified position next to the sun, whose light is diffused by mithra before it reaches the earth. These two nyais are always recited together immediately after the Geh as long as the sun is seen in the sky. It is even said that our morning prayers must give priority to Mehr (atmosphere) over Khurshed (sun) and therefore the Haavan Geh is also dedicated to this angel. Even mention of it is made throughout the Khorshed-ni-nyais ; and Mehr Yest is the longest litany in prayers for the laity.

A short paragraph in its praise from Mehr-ni-nyais cited here will prove its ancient identity.

"Mithrem vovru gavo-yeo-e-tim
Hazangare gaoshem, baevaray chasmanem
Oukhto namnem Yezatem, Yezmaiday

Translation by : C. E. Kangaji.

Mithra, the angel of vast fields ;
of a thousand ears ; of ten thousand eyes
Yezed of the famous name, (let me) merge (with thee)

Kangaji's translations although authentic and of great value to students of Avesta are sometimes confusing. They belong to the last two decades of the nineteenth century. In the present

case, the term 'vast fields' seem to indicate the land ; but Kschnoom throws more light on it, for 'fields' can also be of the atmosphere, such as the magnetic field. Again the terms 'a thousand ears and ten thousand eyes' can only be applied to the atmosphere, as can be proved in this age of radio and television ; and the 'famous name' perhaps refers to the religion 'Mithraism' which spread its wings to eastern Europe in ancient times.

Again in the second half of paragraph 10, in Mehr-ni-nyais reference is made to the seven Dankhyumes of Mithra. Mithrem-ayvi-dankhyum ; Antere-dankhyum ; Aa-dankhyim ; Oopaiyri-dankhyum ; Adyere-dankhyum ; Paiyri-dankhyum and Aypi-dankhyum, which Kangaji considers, are seven countries outside Iran. That is again an error. They are the seven layers of the atmosphere. The last aypi-dankhyum is the layer nearest to the earth. Orthodox Zoroastrians know that the 'aypi' ceremonies of our dead are preferably performed where the environment of that person is gathered when he/she lived. The next paiyri dankhyum is the layer where the character picture (Kayrdaar) of the dead person is shaped. It depicts his manasni, gavasni, kunasni during his life-time on earth.

In paragraph 14 Mithra is invoked to give us comfort, joy, mercy, good health and help to purify and advance spiritually. Surely such praises can only be bestowed on the atmosphere and not on the surrounding countries.

Mithra has other connotations ; as a just and fair arbiter, and thoughts (mental power) as in manthra-ba-mithra (i.e. prayer with suitable thoughts.)

CHAPTER IV

The Body and its Parts

According to Ilm-e-Kschnoom the human body is divided into 3 groups, with three component parts in each.

1. The Material group.
2. The Subtle group.
3. The Spiritual group.

The **Material group** holds the subtle group, and the subtle group holds the spiritual group, one inside the other.

The material body is made up of the outer shell of flesh and bones (Tanu) holding the inner organs (gaitha) and the oily components mucus (aazaad). These three visible parts mingle with dust after death.

The **Subtle group**. The astral body (kayrph) is a replica of the physical body. It is like the lining of a coat. It is the sheath for the Life force (oostaan) and the Desires (tayveeshi).

When death occurs the astral body emanates from the physical body with its component parts, also holding the soul and its components. It stands at the head of the dead person till the '4th glorious morn' (Chahram-ni-baamdaad) when its shackles with the material world are completely broken.

If any of his desires are very strong, such as love, hate or vengeance, the astral body comes as a ghost to the place where it had lived on earth. To prevent that, the appropriate Zoroastrian prayers and ceremonies are performed for the dead, so that the soul's knowledge of its life on earth is completely eradicated.

After severing its ties with the material world, the astral body lives in the atmospheric world in certain centres of Haphta-Kayshwar.

A place is allotted to it according to its Karma on earth. There again it can progress or retard. The average being is re-born on earth. Only the saintly ones progress upwards beyond Nishti the world of Matter.

The **Spiritual group**. The Spiritual group is composed of the soul (wravaan) covering the Divine knowledge (Baodhang) and the Divine Spark (Fravashi). The spiritual group remains within the astral body if it is to be re-born on earth.

If the soul is highly evolved then the astral body is dissolved and shed in the Haphta-Kayshwar, and the soul with its components Baodhang and Fravashi travels even higher in the Spiritual World, Hashti.

Reaching the highest point Baodhang and Fravashi shed their sheath which is the soul and reach the Divine to merge with the Eternal Light, Angre-Rauchao.

Prana (Hindu Life-force)

"Behind the physical sheath of 'anna maya kosha' which is made up of the essence of food, there is the 'Prana maya Kosha' or the vital sheath, which is formed of Prana or energy or the vital airs. The Prana manipulates the physical body. It fills the whole physical sheath. It is the link between the astral and the physical body. When the slender thread of Prana is cut off, the astral body separates from the physical body. Death takes place. Prana that was working in the physical body is withdrawn into the astral body. Breath is the external manifestation of Prana the vital force. Breath is gross, Prana is subtle." By Ramachandra, from Yogic Philosophy.

Fravashi

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God resideth in thee?" — Jesus Christ.

Fravashi is that Divine spark which is lodged in the innermost core of all human beings. As it is the Essence of God Himself it emanated with Ahun the Word.

Fravashi in man is so covered up with carnal desires that the average being is ignorant of this treasure within him. The wickedest of beings possess it, but it lies dormant in him. His wordly appetites prevent him from kindling it. Thus the Fravashi of a wicked person is not recognised or spoken of.

As the soul advances by shedding the desires of the flesh one after the other, his fravashi takes flame. The higher the progress of the soul, the deeper the glow of the Fravashi.

In a saintly being the lustre of his Fravashi radiates his khoray which takes colour. It is then called aura, halo or numbus. This

lustre is only visible to those whose Fravashis are also kindled to a certain degree. To wicked ones it may not be visible.

A good man whose Fravashi glows is called "Ashonam-Fravashinam" in Avesta, after his death. Unfortunately the present custom is to dub all our beloved dead Ashonam-Fravashinam rightly or wrongly.

Khoray or Aura

Khoray or Aura is an energy that emanates from all beings. It differs in its strength and measure according to a person's character and vigour. It extends from a foot to 3 ft. or more, outside the body and because of its oval shape some schools call it the Auric-egg. The Psychic Research Society calls it Ectoplasm.

The Khoray of an average being is gross and with one's change of mood it changes colour. For instance in anger the aura shows shafts of red.

As the soul evolves his Khoray increases in refinement until it takes a lustre of silver or gold in saintly beings. It is only visible to those whose own auras have evolved to a certain degree.

CHAPTER V

The Avesta Language

Avesta is the sacred language of ancient Iran. Ahura-Mazda communed with Zarathushtra in Avesta. It was only used for prayers and worship of God and never profaned to express man's daily mundane thoughts.

The language of conversation was Pazend and later Pahlavi. People thought, spoke and wrote in these dialects ; and so with the passing of time, man gradually failed to understand Avesta. Later, although the prayers were said in Avesta, certain thoughts were added to them in Pazend. They are still evident in our present-day prayer books.

This ancient pre-historic language is very difficult to pronounce for the Gujarati-speaking tongue and larynx. To preserve the correct pronunciations Zarathushtra-temos, who were the spiritual heads of the religion after Zarathushtra, like the Popes of Christianity, added signs and inflections to the Gujarati letters. Prayers in Avesta are called Manthra-vani.

Manthra-vani, when accurately pronounced and sung in a befitting lyric, not only can be thrilling but can produce the right vibrations to get in tune with the pulse of Nature called Ahunaver-no-naad.

Manthra-vani is classified into Manthra-Spenta and Fashooso-Manthra. Manthra is a formula of powerful words and sentences. Vani means utterance of language. Spenta is white.

Manthra Spenta are formulated phrases or sentences which, when uttered as prayers to God, help the spiritual advancement of the soul.

Fashooso-Manthra. Fashooso means highly potent. Fashooso-Manthra were composed of words and phrases so highly potent that their utterance brought immediate salubrious results.

In the course of time as humanity degenerated and evil prospered, people began to use Fashooso-Manthras for their personal vendettas. The Zarathushtra-temos then thought it fit to disintegrate and scatter them into different Yests ; thus considerably reducing their strength.

Manthra-ba-Mithra. Mithra means thoughts ; words with thoughts. It is necessary that prayers be said with a mind devoted to them. Mere babbling or muttering them without concentration of mind is of no consequence. As Shakespeare puts it in Hamlet :

"My words fly up, my thoughts remain below ;
Words without thoughts never to Heaven go."

—Shakespeare

Thus it is essential that while one is praying one's thoughts should not wander.

It is imperative that prayers are uttered in this God-given tongue (Avesta), whose vibrations surpass and out-shine those of all mundane languages.

Yezmaiday

Yezmaiday is a word that often occurs in all our prayers. The depth of its meaning is not understood by all beyond 'praise' or 'admiration.'

Yez means to merge and Yezmaiday is the desire to merge or be in tune with all God's creation ; and eventually to blend with the Almighty Himself.

But before one can reach the God in the Highest, one has to cross many hurdles. Man must first learn to be One with the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms and also with all elements.

The question is posed as to how one can merge with any other entity. To give an example, a very remote example, is to imagine how an enormous iceberg when it comes down to warmer regions merges with the ocean.

But the iceberg, it is argued, can merge with the ocean because it is just water solidified.

So also our spirits can blend with other spirits of all other beings and elements because they are all sparks of the primordial spirit of God Almighty.

We are split souls. Only profound selfless love and devotion can attract a relationship that will gather and bind all spiritual fragments or counterparts from other entities to make an integral soul. Only such an integral soul can leave this earth and its atmosphere and rise to sojourn in the Cosmos.

As for 'praise' and 'admiration', people go from one end of the world to the other to admire the beauty of Nature, whether it is a mountain or a valley, river or a waterfall, a forest or a desert, wild animals or colourful birds. Zoroastrians not only praise and admire them and thank God for the soothing beautiful gifts but are anxious to merge with all nature eventually to reach God through them.

The Gheys

Avesta has divided the 24 hours of the day into five parts called Gheys.

1. The Ooshin Ghey begins after mid-night until 72 minutes before sunrise.
2. The Haavan Ghey is from sunrise to mid-day.
3. The Rapithavan Ghey starts at noon till about 3.30 p.m.
4. The Oojiran Ghey begins after 3.30 p.m. to sunset.
5. The Aivishruthrem Ghey lasts from sunset to mid-night.

The intensity and quality of the sun's energy reaching the earth constantly change, due to the earth's rotation on its axis. These changes are substantial within a few hours. Hence the 24-hour day is divided into five major parts called Gheys.

Just as all documents and letters are dated before any relevant Statement begins, so also it is customary to register the period of the day, with the prayer of that name after every litany of dedication is recited.

The 72-minute interval between the Ooshin and Haaven Gheys is called Hoshbaam, meaning dawn. The word Hoshbaam is also applied to the Dawn of Creation. This 72-minute period is the most effective time of prayers. The first 36-minute period is called the Hoshbaam of Ooshin, and the next 36-minute is the Hoshbaam of Haavan, which means that before the prayer, also called Hoshbaam is chanted, the Ghey Ooshin or Havan as required is first intoned.

It is pertinent to mention here that the time between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m. of Ooshin is also very fructifying for prayers; as the world at that time is very tranquil, consequently the atmosphere is almost void of mundane vibrations.

Rapithavan Ghey begins at noon. Ten minutes after that, till 12.40 p.m. the prayer must be said facing the South, as the sun is almost overhead. That Kusti is said to be the Kusti of Daadaaray-Gehan, because the Gateway to the spiritual world is in the south.

Below is given a Persian poem in "Praise of Dawn" by an unknown Persian author. It was translated into Gujarati by Mr. Dinshaw Masani, a scholar of Avesta; from which a feeble attempt is made to give an English version of it.

In Praise of Dawn

Persian;1. Sobehust vaktay mohsana
Sobehust vaktay daylgusha
Sobehust vaktay jaan fezaa
Burkheez vaktay Sobehadum.

Englishc1. Dawn is the hour of rapture and bliss,
Dawn brings to conscience the charm of peace,
Dawn is the time for Oostan's increase
Wake up from sleep to extol the dawn.

Persian;2. Sobehust vaktay Aashaykaan,
Sobehust vaktay saadekaan,
Dobehust vaktay naatekaan,
Burkheez vaktay sobehadum.

Englishc2. Dawn is the time for the lovers of God,
Dawn belongs to the sinless at heart,
Dawn is the moment for beings of speech,
Awake and arise in the silence of dawn.

Persian;3. Khaahee kay aagaah savi
Dar hurdo aalam shaah savi
Khaahee kay marday raah savi
Burkheez vaktay sobehadum.

Englishc3. If the knowledge of spirit you desire,
To be the lord of two worlds you aspire,
To climb the path of Truth you require,
Wake up to greet the advent of dawn.

- Notes
1. Oostan : Life-force
 2. Beings of speech : human beings
 3. Two worlds : The material and spiritual.

CHAPTER VI

Humata, Hukhata, Huvaresta

'Humata, 'Hukhata, 'Huvaresta are God's thoughts, God's words and God's deeds. 'Hu' means Ahu in the highest and so they are Ahu's thoughts, words and deeds which are of course The Best.

Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni are man's thoughts, words and deeds. They may be good or not-good. His aim of life on earth is to tune his Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni to the pitch of 'Humata, 'Hukhata, 'Huvareshta. In short to be like Him. And so 'Humata, 'Hukhata, 'Huvareshta is the aim of a Zoroastrian's life on earth. For it, there is a short prayer of Ashem Vohu.

Ashem Vohu, Vahistem asti-Usta-asti,
Usta Ahemai, Hyiat ashai, Vahistai ashem.

Translation by Dr. E. Taraporewala.

"Righteousness is the highest good,
It alone is true happiness,
Happiness comes to him
Who is righteous for the sake of Righteousness".

This little prayer is woven in all Avesta litanies. Righteousness comprises all virtues. Ashem Vohu reminds one constantly to lead a life of Righteousness.

Kschnoom advises man to revert to land i.e., till the land and keep domestic animals (panjay gospend) around him. Vandidat says, "one who sows the corn sows righteousness". Thus man creates an environment that draws spiritual forces towards him.

Yatha-Ahu-Vairyo

Yathaa-ahu vairyo athaa
Ratush ashaate chit hachaa
Vangayhush dazdaa mannangho shaothna-
Naam anghush mazdaaic
Kschthremchaa ahurai aa yim
Draygubio dadat vastaarem.

Translation by Dr. Eruch Taraporewala

Just as the temporal ruler is all-powerful among men, so too is the spiritual teacher by reason of his righteousness. The Divine mind is for those who work for Mazda. And the "strength of Ahura" (that is Grace) is bestowed upon him who unto his poor brethren giveth help.

Ashem Vohu stresses Righteous living. The above prayer 'Yathaa-ahu-vairyo' gives emphasis to spiritual knowledge, selfless deeds and regard for others as the principle of action.

Kem naa Mazda

Who, dear Ahura Mazda, will save me and my dear ones when the dark clouds of vengeance glare at us, who but You, dear Lord. Who will protect our sacred household fire and preserve our peace of mind but You, dear Lord. For under Your protection, we grow in rectitude.

Explain to us, that religious knowledge which can vanquish all evil. We pray to you dear God for your loving care. Proclaim to us a holy leader who can guide us in this life and in the life after.

Sarosh yezed will surely bring Vohu mannangha (to give divine knowledge) to those who are beloved of You.

O Ahura Mazda and Spenta Armaity save us from all evil.

Drive away from us the deity of evil; let it disappear from here.

Let the followers of all evil be vanquished; let them fade away to the North.

Let not our vital organs be polluted, but keep them pure and healthy.

We bow to thee O worshipful holy Armaity for thy devotion.

Let the pure vibrations of Ashem be absorbed in us.

Literal Translation

Kem naa mazda : Who, dear Mazda
Mavaiti paayum dadaat : who will save me and my dear ones
Hayat ma drayguvao : when some one
deedareshtaa ainangayh : (with) vengeance glares (at me)

Anyam thavaahamaat : (who) but You (can save us)
 Aathraschaa, mannagashchaa : (who will protect) our household
 fire and preserve our peace of mind (but You dear Lord)
 Yo-ayao sheothnaayish : with the intensity of these two (i.e. of
 the fire and the mind)
 Ashaym thraoshtaa Ahura : we grow in rectitude, Lord
 Taam moyay dastvaam daenyaee fraochaa : Explain to me, that
 religious knowledge
 Kay-verethraym ja thvaa : which can vanquish our enemies ;
 Poi sayngah yoi haynti : (when) your (avesta) writ (we pray)
 to take care of us.
 Chithra moi daam ahubish ratum chisti : Proclaim to us a holy
 leader who can guide us in this life and in the next (after
 death) life.
 At hoi vohu Sarosho jantoo Mannangaah : Send Sarosh yezed
 with Behman Amsaashpand (divine mind)
 Mazda Ahemai, ye hemai vashi khemaichit : dear Lord for those
 who are beloved to you.
 Paatano tebayshianta pairi Mazdaoscha Aarmaitishcha Spayn-
 tashcha : O Ahuramazda and Spenta Armaity save
 us from the envious.
 Nase Daevi druksh : O deity of envy keep away (from us)
 Nase daevo chithre : O evil of envious origin disappear from here.
 Nase daevo frakaarastay : O deity sown of evil, fade away from
 here.
 Nase daevo frdaite : O follower of evil vanish from here.
 Ap druksh nasay : O evil run away (from here)
 Ap druksh dwar : O evil get out of here
 Ap druksh vinasay : O evil go further from here
 Appaakhedre ap-nasea : fade away in the North.
 Maa meraynchainish gaithao aastwaitish ashay : Let not my pure
 inner organs be polluted (with evil)
 Naymascha ya Aarmaitish eejacha : I bow to the devotion of
 Spenta Armaity

Ashem Vohu : Let the pure vibrations of Ashem be absorbed in me.
 Notes : Ma meraynchainish gaithao aastavaiytish ashai : Please
 keep my vital organs healthy so that they gain such purity as to
 disintegrate and be drawn and absorbed in their subtle sources
 of origin in the atmosphere. (at will of their owner)

Everything in the world of Matter is made of the 4 elements
 fire, air, earth, water. Nothing is wasted on disintegration but is
 drawn and absorbed in its subtle source in the atmosphere. If
 it is to be born or created again on earth, it is released from its
 source. This is called 'the conservation of Matter in nature.'

Ahura-Mazda-Khodai

Hail to Thee Ahura-Mazda
 Thy praises I shall ever sing.
 Deliver me from Ahrayman and his legions
 Who lead us to temptation.
 Let their evil power be vanquished ;
 So that I can remain pure
 In body, mind and spirit,
 Forgive me all trespasses
 In thoughts, in words, in deeds
 Accept my repentance O Ahura-Mazda,
 And I promise in the fullness of my heart
 To do the right towards my body and my soul.
 Towards the material and the spiritual worlds ;
 And from now on shall lead a life
 That pleaseth Thee.
 Let the vibrations of Ashem enthrall me.

Literal Translation

Ahura Mazda Khodai : Ahura Mazda the lord of Creation
 Ahrayman avaadshaan dur avaaaz daastaar : (who) drives the evil
 Satan to the farthest end
 Zed shekastay bad : (let him be) beaten and broken.
 Ahrayman devaan darujaan jaaduaan : Satan, demon, those of
 ill omen, magicians,
 Darvadaan, kikaan, kerphan : those against the religion, those who
 have eyes and see not, those who have ears and hear not.

Saastaraan, gunayaraan, ashmogaan ; those who are cruel, those who commit sins, those who preach lies (destroy good)

Darvandaan, dushmanaa friaan ; unbelievers, enemies, evil peris
Zad shaykeshtay baad : (let them be) beaten and broken

Dush-paadshaan avaadshan baad : Wicked kings let them be destroyed.

Dushmanaa satoh baad : Enemies be defeated

Dushmanaa avaadshaan baad : Enemies be driven away.

Ahura Mazda-Khodai : (O) Ahuramazda the Lord of creation

Az hamaa gunaah, petayt pesay maanum : I repent for all sins

Az hervestin, dushmate, duzukhate, duzuveraysta : of all evil thoughts, evil words, evil deeds

Maym pe gayti manid : In this world

Ohyume goft, Ohyume kard, ohyume just : that I have thought, I have uttered, I have done

Ohyume boon boodestayd : (sins) of which seeds I've sown

Azaan gunaah, manashni, gavashmi, kunashni ; all sins in thoughts, in words, in deeds.

Tani, ravaani, geti, minoaani : (Towards) my body and my soul, (against) the material world and the Spiritual world

Okhay avaaksh pesayman : Lord, I shall refrain from them in regret.

Pe say gavashni, pe petayt hom : with the three words (i.e. Manashni, gavashni, kunashni) I recite the prayer of repentance.

Kschothra Ahure Mazdao : Glory be to God

Taroaydeetay Anghre Mainush : (Let) Ahriman be scorned

Haithiaverayshtam hayath vasha freshostaymaym : Let the holy desires of the righteous be fulfilled

Satomay Ashem : I extol righteousness

(Thought when praying) Ashem Vohu : Let the pure vibration of Ashem be merged in me.

Jasmay Avanghay Mazda

Come to my help O Mazda. (3 times)

I am a Mazda Yesnan.

I am of Mazda-Yesna religion as taught by Zarathustra.

I wish to be a true believer and worshipper of the religion.

I esteem good thoughts that are conceived, good words that are spoken, good deeds that are done,

I esteem the good Mazda-Yesna religion

Which liberates me from strife,

Which destroys all means of conflict, within me

That a selfless, sexless, integral soul arises in me.

Among the religions that are, and those that will be,

It is majestic, the best and most beautiful,

This religion of Ahura's laws as taught by zarathushtra.

All mercies come from Ahura-Mazda,

This, to glorify the Mazda-Yesna religion.

(thought when praying one Ashem Vohu)

Let the Azure vibrations of Ashem Vohu be absorbed in me.

Literal Translation

Jasmay avanghay mazda : Come to my help (O) Mazda.

Mazdayesno ahmi : I am a (true) Mazda worshipper.

Mazdayesno Zarthushtish : A Mazda worshipper as taught by Zarathustra.

Fravaraanay aastuatayschaa fraveraytaschaa : I am (true) admirer and believer (of the religion).

Astoai Humataym Mano, Astoai Hukhtaym vacho : I admire the good thoughts that are conceived, good words that are spoken.

Astoai Huverayshtem sheothnem : I admire good deeds that are done.

Astoai Denaam vanghuim mazdayesnim : I admire the good Mazdayesna religion.

Fraspaiyo Khaydram : (which) liberates (my soul) from conflict (within me)

Nidashnaithishaym : Destroys the means of strife, (which is the body).

Khaitvadatham ashonim : (that) a selfless and sexless integral soul arises (in me).

Ya haitinamcha, bushycantnamcha ; (among the religions) that are and those that will be,

Majishtacha, vahishtacha, sreshtacha : (It is) majestic, the best and the most beautiful.

Ya ahurish Zarathushtrish : This (religion) of God's law as taught by Zarathustra.

Ahuraie Mazdaie vispa vohu chinahmmi : All mercies (or gifts) are from God, which I esteem.

Aisha asti dainiao mazdayesnoish astoitish : All this in glorification of the Mazdayesna religion.

(Thought when praying) Ashem Vohu : Let the Azure vibrations of Ashem be absorbed in me.

Note :

The salient point of the Mazdayesna Zarathushti religion is the promotion of the spiritual growth in the individual. As only the three terms, Fraspaiyu khaydram, Nidashnaithishem and Khetvadatham ashonim stipulate the development of the conscience to a high degree of integrity, when it will always choose the right path. This process helps one to transcend the means of strife in one's own body and enables the split soul to gather its lost counterparts and flower into a selfless sexless integral soul.

Jasmay Avangeh mazda is a promise to fulfil the tenets of the religion ; first given by a child at his/her initiation (navjote) and then recited with every kusti.

Sarosh Baj

Glory be to God, let the vibrations of Ashem enthrall me.
(I begin this prayer) In the name of the Lord of Creation; promoter of Evolution ; May His lustre increase.

O Sarosh-Yezed, the chaste and powerful,
Whose body is composed of Manthra.
Who wields the charmed weapon of victory (Tagi)

Against all evil, and who has the authority over God's creation, (help me).

I deeply repent for the sins I have committed in thoughts, in words, in deeds.

Sins against my body and my soul,
Against the material and the spiritual worlds,
For all such sins and other sins,
Accept Lord, my heartfelt repentance ;
And I promise with the three words of
Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni
that from now on I shall abstain from evil.
So with five Yathas and three Ashems
I call to thee, Holy Sarosha,
To be my guide on the path of Truth.

Literal Translation

Kschnothra Ahura Mazdao : Glory be to God.

(Thoughts while praying) One Ahem Vohu : Let the pure vibrations of Ashem Vohu enthrall me.

Pe namay Yezdan Ahura Mazda Khodai, avazuni : In the name of Ahura Mazda, Lord of Creation, promoter of Evolution :

Verezay Khoray avazayad : May his lustre increase.

Sarosh Asho, tagi tan firmaan : Sarosh the chaste, on whom is bestowed the (most powerful) energy of Tagi,

Shekaafte djinn, djinn awzaar : which is the charmed weapon to vanquish the djinn (evil)

Saalaaray damanay Ahura Mazda : who has the authority over God's creation.

Bereshad : reach me (come to my help)

Az hamam guna, petayt pesay manum : I repent for all sins

Az hervestin, dushmate, duzukhte, duzovereshte : of all evil thoughts, evil words, evil deeds.

Maym pe geti manid : In this world.

Ohyume goft, ohyume kard, ohyume just : that I've thought, I've uttered, I've done.

Ohyume boon, bood aystayd : (sins) of which seeds I've sown.

Azaan guna, Manashni, gavashni, kunashni : all sins in thought, words (and) deeds.

Tani, Ravaani, geti, minoaani : (towards my) body (and my) soul, (against) material world (and) the spiritual world ;

Okhay Avaksh pesayman : Lord I shall refrain from them in regret.

Pe say gavashni, pe patet hom : With the three words (Manashni gavashni kunashni), I recite the prayer of repentance.
(With 5 Yathaa-ahu-vairyos and three ashem vohus Invoke the help of Sarosh Yezed).

Fravaranay Mazda-Yesna

I believe, O Ahura, in the Mazda-Yesna religion as taught by Thy prophet Zarathustra.

The faith that is in accord with Thy Laws and is opposed to all Evil.

On this auspicious morn I praise and worship its presiding angel Haavan and his helpers Saavanghay and Vishia, who steer us towards prosperity. May they be glorified.

O holy Sarosh Yezed, of the body of manthra, the wielder of the charmed weapon of victory (Tagi) and upholder of the laws of Ahura, I praise, worship and glorify thee.

O holy Sarosh Yezed Guru (zaota) reveal to me the merits of yatha ahu vairyo, so that I as thy disciple (Ratush) can proclaim the virtues of Ahunavar to the world,

O Sarosh Yezed the chaste, the beautiful, the victorious, the bringer of prosperity to the world, let my soul merge with thee.

Ahunavar is the promoter of the strength of body.

Literal Translation

Fravaranay : I confess or I believe.

Mazda-Yesna Zarathushtrish : (that I am) of Mazda-Yesna religion as preached by Zarathustra.

Vidayvo Ahura takaysho : (The religion) that is opposed to evil and is in accord with the laws of Ahura.

Haavanay ashonay ashay rathvay, yesnaicha, vahamaaicha, kshnothraicha frasastaicha : On this auspicious morn, I worship, praise and glorify (morn's presiding angel) Haavan.

Savangayh vishyaicha ashonay ashay rathvay yesnyaicha vahamyaicha kshnothraicha frasastyaicha : On this auspicious morn I worship, praise and glorify Haavan's helpers Savangayh and Vishyaicha who steer us towards prosperity.

Saroshay Ashea takmay-tanu manthre : Sarosh the chaste whose body is made of manthra, i.e. it absorbs the vibrations of Manthra (Divine prayers).

Derayshi-draosh ahuaitya, kshnothra, yesnyaicha, vahemyacha, kshnothraicha frasastyaicha ; wielder of the charmed weapon (of Tagi) and upholder of the laws of Ahura, I praise, worship and glorify (Thee).

Yatha ahu vairyo zaota (Guru) framay mrutay : Sarosh Yezed (as zaota) reveal to me the merits of yatha ahu vairyo.

Athaa Ratush ashatechit hacha fraashva vidvaao mrutay : so that I as your disciple (Ratush) can proclaim its virtues to the world.

Saroshem ashim, hurodaym : Sarosh the chaste, the beautiful.

Verethrazanaym, fradathgethaym : (Sarosh) the victorious, the bringer of prosperity to the world.

Ashavnaym ashai ratum yezmaiday : (Sarosh) chaste of all chaste leaders, (let me) merge with Thee.

Ahunim vairim tanum peitay : Ahunavar (i.e. Yatha ahu vairyo) preserver of the body (from harm).

Note : 'Fravaranay upto hacha fraashava vidvaao mrutay' occurs in all litanies (i.e. Nyias and Yest). Whichever angels baaj, nyias or yest one is invoking, (as Mehr Yezed in Mehr-ni-nyias or Behram Yezd in Behram-Yest, that angel becomes his Zaota (Guru) and the prayer is the disciple. He prays to the Guru to reveal to him the merits of Yatha-ahu-Vairyo so that he (the pray-er) can proclaim it to the world.

Yesnimcha-Vahmemcha

Glory be to Sarosh Yezed, whose body is Manthra-Spenta ; who wields the charmed weapon of victory and upholds the laws of Ahura. O holy Yezed, your valient deeds, your talent and your skill, I admire and worship.

Literal Translation

Yesnemcha, vehmemcha : (O Sarosh Yezed, I) worship (your) valient deeds.

Aujescha, Zeverescha : (Your) talent, (and your) skill.

Afrinamay Saroshay ashye : (I) admire (thee O) holy Sarosh

Takhmay-tanu Manthray : of the sensitive body of Manthra

Dereshi-draush : wielder of the charmed weapon of victory (i.e. Tagi).

Ahu-iryo : upholder of the laws of Ahura.

The azure vibrations of Ashem envelope me.

Ahmai-Rascha

Grant, O Lord, to thy worshipper
The radiant Khoray (aura), with health
and strength of body that can
conquer base desires.
Grant unto him long life of
happiness in contentment, and bless
him with progeny of innate wisdom.
Bestow upon him that refined
condition of body, mind and spirit
that aspires for your Heaven, dear Lord,
As is my prayer, so let it be.
The vibrations of Ashem envelop me.

Literal Translation

Ahmai : To him

- „ Rascha, Khorenasch : radiant Khoray,
- „ Tanvo dravotataym : health of body
- „ Tanvo vezdevrai : strength of body,
- „ Tanvo verethraym : Conquest of body.

- „ Ishtim paurush khathraym : happiness of Contentment,
- „ asnam Chit frazantim : Progeny with innate wisdom.
- „ Dareghaam daregojitim : long life,
- „ Vahistem ahum ashonam : The refined condition fit for
- „ Heaven (which is)

Rauchanghem, vispo-khatrem : radiant and blissful.

Athe zamyat yatha afrinamay : As I pray So let it be.

Hazangaraym

(Grant me O Lord) a thousand-fold good health. Ten thousand-fold good health. (3 times). Let the vibrations of Ashem merge in me.

Literal Translation

Hazangaraym baishzanaym : a thousand-fold good health.

Baivarai baishzanaym : ten thousand-fold good health.

The azure vibrations of Ashem enthrall me.

Note : To attain that refined condition of the spirit is an arduous task, for which a strong and healthy body is essential.

Jasmay-Avangayh Mazda (2nd)

Come to my help, O Mazda.

May 'Ahm' the angel of courage bring me succour.

May Behram Yezed and the angel Vanant Oopertaat give me victory.

Let Minoo Raam of green pastures instill taste and flavour into my victuals.

Let Vayushah-Ooperkairyo, the Life-giving breezes, fill my soul.

Let the law-abiding firmament and endless Eternity come to my aid.

(O Ahura Mazda help me).

Let the azure vibrations of Ashem fill my soul.

Translation

Jasmay-Avangayh Mazda : Come to my help O Mazda.

Ahmay hutashtay Huroday : (Give me the help) of the beautiful and courage-giving angel Ahm.

Verethraghenay ahuradatay : (the help of) Behram Yezed whom God created.

Vanayintiaoscha oopertaato : of the angel Vananti Oopertat, who brings victory.

Raamno Khastre : of Mino Raam who adds taste and flavour to our victuals.

Vaiyosh ooper-Kairyaa : of Vayay-Yezed who works in the upper regions (of the atmosphere)

Tardato anyash daamaan ; one of the best born.

Aitat tay Vaiyo, Yete tay asti spenta-mainyum : O Vaiyo Yezed your health-giving breezes are of the Spenta-Mino's brightsided excellence. (All these help me).

Thavaashay-khodatay, zarvaanay-akernay, zarvanay-daregoh-khodatay : (Let) this life time, all eras and eternity (help me Lord) Let the holy vibrations of Ashem fill my soul.

Hindu Prana

It is instructive to know the definition of Prana here, not only is it instructive but it is beautiful.

"Hindu scriptures refer not only to "Anu" (Atom) and to "Param-Anu" (Beyond-atom) which are finer electronic energies ; but they also refer to Prana (creative electronic force).

Atoms and electrones are blind forces. Prana is inherently intelligent.

The Pranic Life-trone in the Spermatozoa and ova for instance, guide the embryonic development according to Karmic design."

Yogi Ramchandra
From Yogic Philosophy.

Kerphe-Mozda

To reap the reward of my good deeds
and win forgiveness for my sins,
I perform righteous acts for the love of my soul,
May all pious men of the seven

spheres get their share of blessings
as broad as the earth,
as extensive as the rivers,
and as glorious as the sun.
Lord grant long lives to all righteous ones
As is my prayer so let it come to pass
The azure vibrations of Ashem envelop me.

Note :—The seven spheres are the Haphta-Keshwar-Zamin in the atmosphere.

Literal Translation

Kerpe-Mozda : (To reap the) reward of good deeds

Gohna-gujaarayshnera : (win) forgiveness for sins

Kunam : I (hope to) receive

Ashai ravaan dusharmaraa : for the love of the good souls

Ham kerfay : for all their good deeds

Hama Vahaan : to all the good ones

Haphta Keshwar-zamin : of the seven spheres (in the atmosphere)

Zamin Payhenaa : as wide as the earth

Rood -daranaa : as long (in length) as the rivers

Khorshid baala : as glorious as the sun

Boon dayhaad berayshad : (share of) blessings reach me

Asho bayd dayrzi : (grant) long lives to all pious men

Athe Zemyaid : let it be

Yethaa aafrinaamay : as I pray

Ashem Vohu : The azure vibrations of Ashem envelop me.

All the above "Literal Translations" are done from C. E. Kangaji's "Avesta-baa-Myni" in Gujarati.

Sarosh-ni-Kusti

The present-day Kusti prayer is incomplete Kschnoom recommends Sarosh-ni-Kusti which incorporates a part of Sarosh-baaj in it. It should be said as follows :

(without untying kusti girdle)

1. Fravaranay Mazda Yesna

2. Kemna Mazda.
(Here untie kusti)
3. Re tie kusti with Ahura Mazda Khodai
2 Yathas, 1 Ashem
4. Jasmay avanghe-Mazda
5. 2 Yathas
6. Yesnemcha
7. Ahmai rascha
8. Hazangarem
9. Jasmay-avanghe-Mazda (2nd)
10. Kerphe Mozda.

Some Appreciations

Western scholars of Avesta, mostly Germans have taken great pains to study books on Zoroastrianism and also to translate them.

Some of their views given here are taken from "Bombay and the Germans" by Herr Walter Leifer.

Goethe : One of the great German poets Johann Wolfgang Goethe must be mentioned at length. In his book "Buch der Parsen" (properly understood as "Parsi-nameh") which is a part of a greater work called "West-eastern Divan" he says : Gazing at Nature formed the basis of the worship of the ancient Parsis. Whilst adoring the Creator, they turned toward the rising Sun, as the most strikingly glorious phenomenon. They fancied they saw their God's throne, surrounded by brilliant angels. The pomp of this elevating worship was daily within the reach of every one, even the most lowly. The moon and stars were lighting up the night : they too were out of reach belonging to the realms of the endless. Fire, on the contrary, walks by man's side, giving light and warmth to the best of its capacity. It becomes a sweet and pious duty to say prayers in the presence of this substitute, to bow to what was felt as infinite. Nothing is cleaner than a bright sunrise, and such was to be the cleanliness with which fires were to be kindled and kept, if they were to be and remain sacred and sunlike. From Nature to Nature's God is a principle upon which Zoroastrian teaching about worship are principally based. Nature is the grand manifestation of God.

With the Persian reverence for the Sun and the Fire is connected the idea of what Goethe calls, "Dignity of all the Elements". Hence the sacred dread to pollute water, air, and earth. Such respect for all natural forces that surround man leads to every civic virtue.

Goethe refers to the Iranians' solicitude to keep the ground, water, and air pure. He attributes the origin of their custom of the disposal of the dead to that solicitude for not soiling the ground. To keep all ground neat and pure is one of the oft-repeated firmans of the Avesta. In the Vendidad such a ground is represented as feeling pleased and delighted. While speaking of their "strange mode of disposing of their dead", says it is "due to excessive care of not soiling the pure elements".

Now, one can easily understand how air, earth, and water can be kept pure, but not so easily, how fire can be kept pure. Of course, a Parsi is asked to be careful to see, that he places dry, clean, and fragrant wood over the sacred fire. That is a kind of physical purity. But in a Pahlavi writing attached to the Pahlavi "Shayast la Shayast," fire, not only the sacred fire of the fire-temples but also the culinary fire burning in one's hearth at home, is required to be kept pure and clean. Here it is the work of moral purity that is spoken of. Physical purity is here a symbol of moral purity. So, it is said, that if one cooks upon the fire of his house some food that he has purchased from money dishonestly acquired, he defiles the fire, he makes it impure. Similarly, if a worshipper offers to the sacred fire of the fire-temple odoriferous wood or incense that is bought from money acquired dishonestly, he displeases the fire.

With purity and cleanliness, go, to a certain extent, Order, Harmony, Discipline which helps one in his daily fulfilment of duty and work. Goethe makes his testator direct : "When you plant trees let them stand in rows, for he (the Sun) gives prosperity to what is well ordered." 'Order' is one of the characteristic teaching of Avesta. The word 'Asha' which is one of the few technical words of Avesta that cannot be sufficiently well rendered into another language, significantly contains the idea of Order. What is good, right or perfect in points of Order, Discipline, Purity, Harmony, Truth, Beauty, is Asha. It carries with it the idea,

not only of physical Order, but moral Order. Ahura Mazda, is the Ashoan Asho, the Most Orderly of the Orderlies.

Mr. Samuel Lang, the author of *Modern Science and Modern Thought* says in his "Modern Zoroastrian," is somewhat the same as what Goethe says, about the "respect for all natural forces that surround man" leading "to every civic virtue." He says: "In this respect, however, what I have called the Zoroastrian theory of religion affords great advantages. It connects religion directly with all that is good and beautiful, not only in the higher realm of speculation and of emotion, but in the ordinary affairs of daily life. To feel the truth of what is true, the beauty of what is beautiful, is of itself a silent prayer or act of worship to the Spirit of Light; to make an honest, earnest, effort to attain this feeling is an offering or act of homage. Cleanliness of mind and body, order and propriety in conduct, civility in intercourse, and all the homely virtues of everyday life, thus acquire a higher significance, and any wilful and persistent disregard of them becomes an act of mutiny against the Power whom we have elected to serve."

The dignity associated with the elements is practical. It carries with it and conveys the idea of, Purity and Cleanliness, Order and Harmony. A beautiful Avestan maxim illustrates all that Goethe says. The maxim is: *Yaozddo mashyai aipi zanthem vahishta*, i.e. Purity is the best thing for man, since his very birth....

Martin Haug lived in the period from 1827 to 1876 and spent many long years collecting material on the cultural heritage of the Parsis.

Haug was to become one of the most outstanding scholars to make a contribution to the field of oriental studies through the voluminous research he conducted into cultural treasures of the followers of Zarathustra.

On March 1, 1861, Haug delivered a lecture on the origin of the Parsis in which he demonstrated that there was enough historical proof of the Prophet Zarathustra actually having lived and preached at a particular period in history:

"... that his aims and pursuits were the highest to which a mortal can aspire, viz., the temporal as well as the spiritual welfare of mankind, this involves the purest and loftiest love of Truth and Virtue. So, we must class Zarathustra amongst the

greatest of men who ever lived and as one of the real benefactors of the human race."

Haug mentions the philological discussions he had with the Parsi scholars. Here it is perhaps interesting to take note of the polemical discussions on linguistic questions that Haug often had with Spiegel and which it must have given him some pleasure to describe to his learned friends in Bombay.

At a time when he was writing his outstanding books on the Parsi heritage, Martin Haug was also often invited to deliver lectures before Parsi or partly-Parsi audiences. Thus it was that on October 8, 1864, at the invitation of the Friends of the Parsi community, he addressed an almost exclusively Parsi audience on Zarathustra and His Age.

At the end of his speech, he summed up:

"According to this investigation we can't assign to Zarathustra a later date than about 2300 B.C. Thus he lived not only before Moses but even, perhaps, before Abraham! If we consider the early age in which he lived, it is not surprising that the high and lofty ideas which he proclaimed were early misunderstood and misinterpreted. For he stood far above his age. So he was the first prophet of the Truth who appeared in the world and kindled a fire which thousands of years could not entirely extinguish."

On his return to Germany, in spite of his responsibilities as holder of the Chair of Sanskrit at Munich, Haug persisted with his deep interest in the research work on the Parsis and he revised and edited many of the books that he had already worked on during the time he was in Bombay.

Friedrich Spiegel was one of the earliest and most distinguished of German scholars to dedicate himself to research and Iranian studies. He provided the academic world with much research on the Avesta language which at the time was still referred to as the Zend-Avesta. Spiegel critically edited the writings of Avesta and undertook the gargantuan task of comparing all the manuscripts on that subject which were to be found in Europe at that time.

In a tour of some of the most well-known seats of European learning, Spiegel also visited Copenhagen, Paris, London, and Oxford, where he made notes on copies of the manuscripts that he found in the libraries there. He also made critical compa-

risons of the various manuscripts that were put at his disposal Spiegel was perhaps the first oriental scholar to undertake a critical study of the writings of the Zoroastrian tradition.

Also of great significance to Iranian scholars is Spiegel's edition of the Zend-Avesta in three parts published from 1852 to 1963. The Spiegel Memorial Volume of 1903, edited by Jivanji Jamshedji Modi at Bombay, is the best proof of the Parsis' respect to the German scholar Friedrich Spiegel.

It is interesting to note that in one of the books published by this scholar with the title *Vendidad Sade* (Leipzig, 1850) comprised the *Vendidad*, *Yasna* and *Visparad*, many of the footnotes make reference to the Framji Aspendiarji edition. The work of this Parsi scholar was published during 1842-43 in Bombay.

Dr. Leo Meurin (1825-95) was a member of the outstanding institution of the German Jesuits. In 1863, when he with his scholarly pursuits started the Bombay Catholic Debating Club which almost immediately dropped the word "Catholic" and became simply the "Bombay Debating Club" — a place where animated discussions were conducted on a wide range of subjects not necessarily limited to Catholic doctrines. Discussions were free and animated and the audience of the Bombay Debating Club included not merely Christians but Parsis, Hindus and members of other religions, all of whom were free to give their own opinions on the subjects being debated.

Perhaps Dr. Meurin's most important contribution to a dialogue between the various religious communities was a little pamphlet entitled "*Zorathustra and Christ*" (pp. 531-626 of *Select Writings*) which was later published in a book form.

This treatise was planned in the form of letters exchanged between an imaginary Catholic layman and Dr. Meurin himself. In the course of this correspondence a distinguished member of the Catholic hierarchy in Bombay analysed for one of his faith, the message of Zarathustra in an effort, perhaps, to establish for himself the links that existed between the religions which show mankind as the sons and daughters of an eternal God.

The correspondence was initiated by a letter from the imaginary Catholic laymen in which the discussion was centered around the mystery of the "Word".

For instance, how happily does the belief of the Parsis, that God the Almighty in the beginning had a Word with him; called the Honover, (Ahunavar) by the help of which he created the world and all things that are therein, correspond with the text given in Chapter I of St. John: 'In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him.' The word Honover is believed by the Parsis to possess a most wonderful power, and its repetition is frequently recommended in the various Parsi prayers.

In a letter written by Dr. Meurin we learn about his personal relationship to the subject under discussion:

"During the first four-and-a-half years of my priesthood, I was one of the Vicars of the celebrated Cathedral of Cologne, the finest Church in the whole world. It is dedicated to the Three Wise Men or 'Magi' who came from the East to Jerusalem to worship the new-born Child Jesus at Bethlehem. That these Magi were priests of the Zoroastrian religion, we know from Greek writers. Following the Star, of which Balaam had prophesied: 'a Star shall rise out of Jacob', they came to Judea to Him who was signified by the Star.

The Apostle St. Thomas before going to Malabar, where he established the Church still in existence there, met those three Magi in their own country and baptised them. The Empress St. Helene (born 248 A.D.) brought their relics from the Orient to Constantinople, whence they were taken in 1143 to Milan, and in 1164 to Cologne by Archbishop Reynold, who had received them from the Emperor Frederic. There the present cathedral the greatest masterpiece of Art, was built from 1248 to 1880 and dedicated to their honour. The skulls are still preserved in a most precious golden shrine and daily seen and venerated by an immense number of visitors. And it was at their shrine that I almost daily offered the Holy Sacrifice to God, little imagining that one day I would be so near to their successors and co-religionists in Bombay".

Every German who visited Bombay and recorded his impressions has dealt with the Parsis and their peculiar custom of disposing of the dead. Hans Henno von Veltheim-Ostrau gives a detailed account of the customs of the Parsis from his personal friendship with some prominent Parsis in Bombay. The most fascinating phenomenon for the Germans was the presence of the

Towers of Silence in such a beautiful locality like Malabar Hill. It is felt by them (the Parsis), that it is cruel, ugly, unusual and unhygienic to leave the dead bodies to hungry birds, especially the vultures. But as Helmuth Glasenapp points out, "it is written in "Vendidad" that "the dead shall be buried in the stomach of the Vultures." It is cruel, because there is the idea of feeding animals behind this practice. And as Paul Deussen says, "the whole procedure and ceremony has nothing frightful about it or at least less than the Christian practice of burial".

Zarathustra

Prophet of ancient Iran

Motif : Usta no zato aterava
 Yo spitomo Zarathustra

Praise be to God
 Spitamo Zarathustra, the "Enlightened One" is born to us.

ZARATHUSTRA

Act I — Scene 1

(Pauses are to be long)

Characters : (Pourushaspa, Father of Zarathustra
Dogdova, Mother of Zarathustra.

The night is resplendent with brilliant stars, shedding peace and joy on the universe.

On one side is a gurgling stream. On the other is a hut. A woman is kneeling reverently over the cradle of a new-born child. A man comes out of the hut and looks into the night. He lifts up his hands in praise of God for the gift of the babe.

Background music in two long vibrating notes. Laughter of the babe is heard. The night whispers the Motif "Usta-no-zato athrava Yo-spitamo Zarathustra"

Motif repeats-growing deeper and sonorous. This silent awe-inspiring scene is held on for a full minute.)

Pouru : Dogdova, my dear one — (pause)
Hast thou noticed the radiant effluence that fills the night ? (pause) All the universe vibrates with joy — (pause) for the holy babe that is born to us (pause)

Dogdova : Ay beloved — (pause) my whole Being is filled with delight — (pause). Glory be to God, who has entrusted us to love and tend this treasure. Oh, look Pourushaspa — how the light shines through him (pause)

(They look into the crib amazed)

- Dogdova : Yet, I have a strange fear — (pause).
He should be guarded from the Evil Ones —
(Music and voices sing the motif — gradually
louder)
- Pouru : List, — (pause) I hear voices (listens).
(music and voices repeat motif louder).
- Voices : Usta-no Zato athrava
Yo spitamo Zsrathustra
- Pouru : (In stage whisper and slow) Usta-no-Zato athrava
— Yo — spitamo Zarathustra. (Enthralled we
shall call him Zarathustra.
- Dogdova : (as in a trance — after a pause) Spitamo Zarat-
hustra (pause).
- Pouru : Come, beloved, let's gaze at the splendour of the
holy night. — (pause) God has lit His starry
world to its full lustre — and the fragrant air is
filled with Divine music to glorify the blessed
event.
(Music and voices continue softly. Dogdova
slowly moves away to the far end of the hut to
gaze at the splendour of the night.)
(Enter the wicked Dura-sarun with evil motives.
He stealthily approaches the babe's crib while
Pourushaspa and Dogdova are watching the sky
at the other end. The man gazes with awe for a
while at the infant. Then pulls out a dagger from
under his robe and lifts it high to pierce the
infant. The glow in the crib increases. The
lifted hand becomes stiff and paralysed and looses
its grip on the dagger which falls with a clang.
Pourushaspa and Dogdova turn briskly and
rush. Pourushaspa towards the man and
Dogdova to the crib.
Culprit somehow escapes holding in agony his
paralysed arm)

- Music grows louder.)
- p'shaspa : (shouts in fear) A thief, murderer, I shall kill him.
(runs off the stage after the man)
- Dogdova : (In fright looks into the crib) Oh, my Precious
child. My angel, (Pause) Merciful God, thy
watchful eye has saved him (falls on knees in
weakness and prays.)
(Music gradually dies out as curtain falls).

Scene 2

- (About 2 years later
Time — early morning.
Earth-soul, tired and frustrated, with oxen and
plough looks desperately on the ground.)
- Earth-soul : (plaintively) It was only yesterday, that we toiled
and sweated hard, — to plough this land, (pause)
and now — it is again trampled and strewn with
the blood, and mutilated bodies of my dear
children (pause). These Evil ones, these
Devas — will never rest until they conquer the
gentle and the meek. (pause) Oh father, — Is it
ever to be thus ? (pause). That my bosom
should endure these indignities ? (pause). That
it should be scattered with bones, where good
corn should grow — and flowers should bloom ?
(pause) That my rivers should o'erflow with the
blood of my loved ones, — where fresh cool
water should run ? — (pause). All my good men
and dear animals — flesh of my flesh — are
savagely slaughtered (pause). Louder) Oh God,
— hast Thou deserted me in this hour of need ?
(long pause)
(Sound of thunder. E. soul looks up with awe)

A deep voice : Gentle daughter (pause). Thy prayer is heard — (pause)

E. Soil : (in awe and amazement) God, art Thou speaking to me ?

Voice : Aye, speak, — thy desire.

E. Soul : (Bewildered and hopeful) Praise be to Thee — Oh heavenly father (pause). I am perplexed. — I am lost (pause). I need Thy help (pauses long to think). Send unto me a warrior — (pause). A great warrior — who can kill and destroy all the Evil ones (pause). So that my lands can again be tilled and sown, (pause) and my fields undulate with golden corn (pause). My meadows bloom with fragrant flowers (pause) and fresh cool water run in my streams and rivers, (pause) and — (pause) above all (pause) — let there be, — Peace, peace (pause) Peace on Earth, (pause) and to men (pause), Good will : (long pause).

Voice : Dear daughter of the Earth (pause) Such a warrior — as thou wantest — is already born on thy soil (pause). He shall destroy all evil.

E. soul : (Listens and after a pause) Oh, thanks be to Thee, gracious Lord (pause). (suddenly remembering) and what shall be the weapon, with which he strikes the Devas ? (pause)

Voice : Eloquence of speech shall be bestowed upon him (pause), with it, shall come — peace on Earth — Good will to men !

E. soul : (amazed and slowly) Eloquence of speech ? (pause) — But Lord (pause), The Devas are so full of wicked strength : (pause) They must be faced with a deadly weapon — that can draw blood and deal mortal blows ! (pause)

Voice : Gentle child (pause) It does not please thy Father in Heaven to shed blood (pause). The weapon of speech will have the power to turn Evil into Good (pause). Bear with us — and thy earth shall flourish again (pause)

E. soul : (after reflection, resignedly) Lord, Thou art my saviour — Thou knowest best (pause). I bow to Thy Will.

(Bows with hands joined in prayer)
Curtain.

Act II — Scene 1.

(30 Years later : Enter Medyomah (Zarathustra's cousin) and Zarathustra. Zarathustra has returned from the mountains. He meets his cousin Medyomah who is to go with him on his journeys.

Medyomah : Good cousin Zarathustra, I'm delighted to embrace thee, I have come to journey with thee, and learn from thy teachings (pause). I can see that the Almighty has bestowed on thee His Grace.

Zarath : Welcome brother. Truly I am at peace (pause). With my Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni tuned to the pitch of 'Humata, 'Hukhta, 'Hu-vereshta, Ahura-Mazda has entered my heart.

Medyomah : Brother, I too aspire for one fleeting glimpse of Him (pause). But I understand not what thou sayest.

Zarath : What I said just now is of importance Medyomah. Man's thoughts, words, and deeds are his Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni. They may be good or they may be not-good. 'Humata, 'Hukhta, 'Huvershta are God's thoughts, words and deeds. If a man desires to be God-like, he must learn to better his thoughts and words, and deeds every day, until they are in concord with those of Heaven. Then only will his spirit fly to meet the Almighty. To merge in Him !

Medyomah : (Amazed) You mean that a humble spirit like mine, can be absorbed in His exalted Lustre ?

Zarath : Ay, ay, that is where it comes from, and that is where it returns after it is free from all dross, and is subtly refined. Our holy Avasta says, "Ahuram — Mazdam, ashonem, Ashai-ratum Yezemaideh" — That I may merge in Ahura-Mazda the Highest Lord of purity (pause). But come cousin, let's

begin our journey. Experience will increase thy faith and expand thy soul.

Medyomah : Good cousin, I shall follow thee readily. For I know I shall profit by thy wisdom (They start walking and Curtain comes down)

Scene 2

(Enter Zarathustra and Medyomah)

Medyomah : We had a long and weary journey brother. Let's rest a while and refresh ourselves (pause). The sky looks heavy and the breeze is rising.

Zarath : Ay cousin, we shall need all strength to cross the river — We shall pray to the Bounteous Lord for an easy walk-over. (They wash hands, feet and faces)

Medyomah : (In fear) The river is broad.

Zarath : So it is (pause).

Medyomah : Soon the sun will retire.

Zarath : Ay, we shall not tarry long, we should be on the other side of the river before darkness overtakes us (pause). Art thou afraid Medyomah ?

Medyomah : (Hesitatingly) Oh no, no, not when thou art with me. (They pray, Medyomah is uneasy. Looks towards the river in fear)

Zarath : Come cousin, let's go.

Medyomah : But — you know not how deep the waters are !

Zarath : God will see to it that we tread in shallow waters.

Medyomah : (After a pause) But — you know not how strong the current is, brother !

- Zarath : Cousin mine, set aside thy weakness and follow me. Put thy faith in God, and thou shalt be safe.
- (Medyomah follows Zarathustra in reluctance. Both holding up their robes to cross. The lights are dimmed to change the drop-scene to one of a landscape.) A moment later Zarathustra and Medyomah enter from the other side as the lights go up.)
- Medyomah : (Amazed) Forgive me my lack of faith dear Lord ; Forgive me the want of courage (pause). Zarathustra, what amazing powers the Lord has bestowed on thee.
- Zarath : (As they walk) A like reward may be thine, as thy spirit grows. (pause) But remember one thing, cousin, miracles do not signify spiritual growth. One may have to labour hard for a whole lifetime and yet remain gross.
- Medyomah : I shall strive hard to attain those spiritual heights.
- Zarath : I wish thee well cousin.
- Medyomah : We have been on the road for a long time Zarathustra. What is our destination ?
- Zarath : We go towards sun rise. We might reach the court of the great Shah Kai-Vishtaspa, who rules Iran from his high seat in Balkh.

Act III — Scene 1.

- (Vishtaspa Shah of Iran, Farshostra his Vazier and Jamaspa his astrologer, 10 years later. The court of King Vishtaspa, in Persian splendour, Enter King Vishtaspa, with his Minister Farshostra, his astrologer Jamaspa and some courtiers. King Vishtaspa sits on his throne. All bow.)
- Farshostra : Hail Shah-in-Shah. Behold your humble servants, ready in your service to carry out your behests.
- King Vis. : Aye dear courtiers. Your loyalty is great. I lack not in appreciation (pause) Ah Farshostra, are you sure that all our kingdom was searched for a man who can cure my beloved horse ? (pause). He means more to me, than life itself (pause). If I lose him, I can never be happy again.
- Farshostra : Sire we have searched East and West — we have looked North and South. — We have brought all the Hakims and magicians from in, and outside your kingdom, but none has a remedy to restore vigour to this animal.
- King : Animal you call him Farshostra ? — why, he's human to me ! (pause) When I am on his back, he is part of me — and when he gallops off — ah, we are on the wings of the wind. (pause) I am broken without him ! (long pause)
- (Farshostra and Jamaspa consult in whispers)
- Jamaspa : (softly to Farshostra) Shall we ask permission to call the aid of Zarathustra ?
- Farshostra : Aye, that, I think is the only resource now.
- Jamaspa : (Loudly) Sire, there is a prisoner in your custody at present. He might be of help.
- King : And who is he, Jamaspa ?

Jamaspa : He is the one who was imprisoned for sedition and heresy some time ago. He is the sorcerer Zarathustra !

King : We have had sorcerers and magicians by the score — But all of no avail.

Jamaspa : Sire, I have been noticing This One (pause). He has great occult powers, — and may restore your horse to health, with his holy manthras.

King Vis : Manthras ? and what are manthras pray ?

Jamaspa : Manthras are formulated phrases or sentences which when uttered in fervent prayer to the Almighty, bring health and happiness to body and soul. These are manthra-spenta. There are also fashooso-manthras, that have words or phrases already highly potent. The right utterance of which would produce immediate salubrious results.

King : (after thinking) Ah that might be helpful. (pause) I shall not leave a single stone unturned for Aspashahi (pause to think). Bring the prisoner here.

Farsh : (To a soldier) Shepasalar, go and lead the prisoner Zarathustra here, to the Shah-in-Shah. Soldier bows low and retires)

King : What is this talk of sedition ? — What has the man been preaching ?

Farsh : Your majesty ; He talks of Spenta-Meniu and Angreh-Meniu, the good and evil Spirits. He talks of Man's struggle with himself. — He talks of 'Humata, 'Hukhta, 'Huvaresha, — good thoughts, good words, good deeds — He talks of God in the Highest in whom all 'Spirit and Matter' will ultimately merge.

King : Sounds a strange doctrine — (pause) and where are these Spenta-meniu and Angreh-meniu ? — Are they in our kingdom ?

Jamaspa : Shah-in-Shah, they are everywhere in this world (pause) Without and within us. (pause) Man has to fight the greatest battle within himself — (pause) Greater than any fought against the Devas, on the bloodiest battle-fields, where flesh is torn and blood is spilt ; — but the spirit remains unhurt. It rises again seeking two-fold vengeance. (pause) I have heard this Zarathustra talking, — and feel, he has profound wisdom ! — His very presence stirs one's soul. Farshostra and I have learnt a great deal from him. (pause)

King : Strange indeed ! — and also thought provoking — (pause). But my mind is so full of my horse. (pause). If Zarathustra can bring him back to health, — we shall be pleased to discuss — and even — accept his doctrines.

Enter prisoner led by the soldier)

(There is a moment's silence, as King and courtiers are awed by Z's mere presence)
(pause)

King : (In stage whisper) Zarathustra !
(Prisoner meekly looks up and looks down again)

King : (Louder) Zarathustra — Art thou a magician ?
Zara. : (Slowly and Softly) I'm a servant of Ahura Mazda, the Almighty.

King : I hear thou hast great occult powers ! (pause)
I have a horse, — a wonderful horse. — He's now afflicted with a dread illness which has rendered his limbs useless (pause) — Canst thou not by thy powerful manthras, restore them to health ?

Zara : (Gently) If God is willing, — he can be made whole.

- King : And thy reward — magician ?
- Zara : I make no demands.
- King : That's strange again — (pause) But the Shah of Iran does not let pass a good service unrequited. (Thinks) I shall grant thee four boons, — One for each leg of my steed, restored to its full strength.
1. ;Firstly, I promise to accept thy creed which is of 'Truth'.
 2. ;Next — my Queen shall be thy initiate.
 3. ;Thirdly, Aspandiar, my son shall fight for thy doctrine with his sword.
 4. ;And lastly, those who brought ignominy upon thee, shall be meted out their share of punishment.
- Zara : Sire, thy bounty, I hold in esteem — Thy bidding shall be done (pause). My fervent prayers of manthra-spentas and Fashooso-manthras shall rise to Heaven, and if it pleases Him — and if he so desires, your steed shall be restored to health.
- King : I'm pleased with thee, Zarathustra ; come let's not tarry ; for Aspashahi is in agony. I shall lead you to him myself. (King and Zarathustra retire, the others follow)

Scene 2

(Next day in the Royal garden, Enter King, Farshostra, Jamaspa. All in good spirits.)

- Farsh : The Shah-in-Shah is in a resplendent mood today.
- King : Verily, we are ! for Aspashahi is on his legs again. He galloped me over fields and forests today. (pause) Farshostra, didst thou notice, how Aspashahi responded to Zarathustra's supplications ? — (pause) Didst thou mark, how like lightning he sprang up to his touch ? —

(pause) He shot like an arrow even before I could settle on his back ! — (pause) Ah, that was just wonderful ! — (pause) This man Zarathustra, — has magnetic powers. To stand beside him, while he was praying, thrilled me to the core (pause) I remember my father telling me, when I was a boy — that there was born in his Kingdom a Holy child, who was named Zarathustra. An unusual name, isn't it. Father explained that "Zarath" was yellow, — golden, — and "ushtra" means lustre, — and this Golden-lustre would one day be a great Spiritual teacher. (pause) Could this be the Holy one ? (pause) Jamaspa, you should know, for you read the stars.

- Jamaspa : Sire, the heavens do show signs of a Spiritual change coming over Iran, — and I am sure Zarathustra is the Enlightened one to shed new light on us.
- King : Farshostra, Jamaspa, — I have a wish to share his lore of wisdom. — I have granted him his freedom, and have asked him to meet us here, in the garden. (pause) (Looks towards the entrance). There, I can see him coming.

(Enter Zarathustra)

- King : Welcome, Zarathustra. Your manthras worked marvelously. I'm indebted to thee, truly.
- Zarath. : Peace be unto thee Shah-in-Shah. The Almighty wished it so.
- (pause)
- King : Zarathustra, tell me how thou has attained this knowledge and wisdom. (pause)
- Zarath. : I was in the wilderness for long years, leading an austere life, on the brink of Silence. (pause) There, the Almighty was pleased to commune with me and teach me the language of Nature itself. — It

is the Holy Avesta ! It is a message of Peace and Good will, through me, to the world.

King : And what is that message pray ?

Zarath. : Man has to make his Spiritual progress towards the Eternal Light, which brings Divine Knowledge, Bliss and Immortality. The supreme aim of Human Life is to acquire all the attributes of God which is the final purpose of Nature's Evolution, — to possess Him, to reside in Him. (pause) Therefore Shah, His message is to lead a life of Righteousness. (pause) With the Love of God in you heart and words of Devotion on your lips, — be ever ready to serve your poor brethren who need help. (pause) Thus the strength of Ahura shall pour unto you.

King : Shalt thou not teach me how to pray ?

Zarath. : (pause) When it is day, face thou the golden orb which is the Sun : for his splendour is the garment of the Lord ; Lift up thy hands to Heaven and chant thus : (chants with fervour) Kschnaothra Ahurahe-Mazdao ! Ashem-Vohu ; Vahishtem-asti Usta-asti, Ushta-hamai, Hyat-ashai, Vahis-tai ashem.

King : (pause) Ah, these words hold charm. (pause) But what do they say ?

Zarath. : They have a charm, because they come from Ahura-Mazda Himself. They sing the Glory of God and they tell you that "Righteousness is the highest good. It Alone is true happiness ; Happiness comes to him who is Righteous for the sake of Righteousness".

King : (Thoughtfully) Righteous for the same of Righteousness, and not because honesty is the best policy.

Zarath. : Ay, ay, Shah-in-Shah, your grasp is keen.

King : I shall keep this little prayer in my heart and utter it a thousand times a day. (pause) But when darkness falls and the sun is not there, where do I turn ?

Zarath. : When darkness comes, turn to the fire in thy hearth, tend it dearly, — feed it with incense and keep it ever alive. Its lustre will always attract the Holy Spirits into thy dwelling.

King : But tell me Zarathustra, is there not a special message for a King ?

Zarath. : That, there is. A man is born a King for his past good Keshas. Kschtra-vairye, — the righteous Power is bestowed on him ; which gives him the Divine Right to rule. (pause) He looks to the happiness of his subjects. He feeds the poor ; — he clothes the naked and he tends the sick. — In sooth, he is a shepherd to his flock. But the day he abuses this Kschtra-vairya to tyrannize over his people, — he draws on him the wrath of the Almighty — (pause) His happiness and his kingdom are destroyed.

King : (Slowly) With the Grace of Ahura-Mazda I shall rule as it pleaseth Him. (pause) Zarathustra, I am deeply indebted to thee for this knowledge. — Thou shalt teach me every day. — How to live, and how to rule, how to thank the Almighty for leading me to the path of Truth. (Turning to his ministers) Farshoetra, Jamaspa, listen — (pause) Send out a firman to my people that Zarathustra is our Spiritual teacher, and whosoever wisheth shall enter his fold.

For my God is the God of Zarathustra.

The God who shines through the Sun in the sky. And through the Fire upon the Earth. And I am content. — I need no other God..

Act IV — Scene 1.

(Some years later. Enter King Vishtaspa, with courtiers ; meets Zarathustra in the Garden.)

King Vis. : Zarathustra, the sight of thee refreshes me !

Zara. : Hail Shah-in-Shah ; God's blessings on thee, thy abode be ever in his Light.

King Vis. : Thanks Zarathustra, thou art the jewel of my Kingdom. Thy teachings have brought peace goodwill to my people, and health and plenty cheer the entire land. (pause) Thou hast revealed to us God's great plan ; and thy teachings unfold the Spirit in man. (pause) Yet I am so restless at heart (pause) Four boons I had granted thee, when thou didst cure my precious steed. (pause) Today, four wishes I crave of thee (pause) Prophet, tell me they shall be granted.

Zarath : Sire reveal to me your desires and I shall do my utmost to bring you succour.

(pause)

King Vis : My Soul has a longing for a vision of Heaven to know how I am held in God's esteem. Next, I wish that faculty, to see and know all present, past and future.

Thirdly let my body be so invulnerable, that no weapon can pierce it — no evil can sully it.

Lastly, let not my body and soul be parted until the last day of judgement.

These are my heart's desires and these I ask thee to fulfil.

Zarath : Sire, I am but God's humble servant. I shall pray to Him that your wishes come true. (pause) But I beseech thee, consider the imbalance in the Law of Nature if four boons are lodged in one human heart. (pause) Even the Archangels, — each is bestowed with One attribute of God.

Therefore Shah-in-Shah, choose a single gift for thyself, and let the other three be distributed amongst thy scions and warriors, who also merit high rewards.

King : (Thoughtfully) Zarathushtra, Prophet, thy words are full of wisdom (pause). I have set my heart to experience my Heaven. (pause) Grant me that boon. The rest I leave to your profound judgement.

Zarath : Sire, assemble your courtiers here tomorrow. Call all your warriors who have worked and fought for Truth. Bid them come with devotion in their hearts. Our joint prayers and fervent appeals shall rise to Heaven ; and if the Almighty so wills, His gifts shall be showered on the worthy ones. Till then, put your trust in the Divine Grace, let God be your constant thought, your unceasing prayer.

King : Ah, Zarathustra, my thoughts shall rise to Heaven and my lips shall sing His praise. — (pause) Adieu we shall meet on the morrow. It shall be a holy gathering and thou canst prove thy doctrine's worth.

Scene 2.

(The court of Vishtaspa assembled in splendour, with his sons Aspadia and Peshotan, his ministers Farshostr and Jamaspa, and other great ones. Zarathustra stands on one side in a prayerful pose.)

King : Now Zarathustra, we await thy bidding.

Zarath : I beseech one and all to join me in silent prayer. (Zarathustra starts singing a verse or two from the Gathas) (To be softly, slowly, clearly and ultra-melodiously chanted. After which celestial

music is heard in the distance. It gradually becomes louder, as three angelic figures appear on the stage in brilliance. King and Courtiers stand up in awe.)

Zarath : Hail, holy Spirits — to the abode of Kai-Vishtaspa.
(Long pause)

Voice of Spirit : We are the Archangels, Vahu-Mano and Asha-Vahishta, and this the Spirit of the Holy fire Boorzin-Meher (pause) We come from the Almighty at thy behest Zarathustra. (pause). We bring blessings for the Shah and his warriors, on the promise that they uphold the faith given to thee by the God in the Highest. (King and courtiers bow and hold up their right hands, palms showing in acceptance of the promise).

Burzin : Valiant Aspandiar, scion of Kai-Vishtaspa, thou hast won grim battles for the faith. (pause) Taste this fruit of the evergreen pomegranate, — and thy body shall be invulnerable to all evil. Thou shalt keep on fighting for Zarathustra's doctrines.

Aspand : (Comes forward and eats of the divine fruit)
Thanks great Spirit. — Ah, I already feel my blood warming up, — and my muscles tighten as of steel.

Asha-Vahis : (Offering a flower to Jamaspa) Grand Vizier Jamaspa, thou readst the stars, for thee is the perfume of the Rose of Paradise, — inhale it, — and every breeze that brings the scent, shall waft the Past, Present and Future before thine eyes.

Jamaspa : (Comes forth and smell it) Ay, ay, Good Spirit, it has a heavenly perfume, — Thanks be to God for the great boon.

Vahu-M : Peshoten, — Kai-Vishtaspa's blood runs in thy veins. Thou art the pillar of Truth. — Take a

draught from this cup. It is goat's milk mixed with the holy Haoma-Juice. It's thrice blest by the Almighty. It's the Elixir to keep your body and soul together till the last day of judgement.

Peshoten : (Drinks from cup offered to him) Ah, I feel peacefully exalted. I am grateful to my God for this bounteous gift.

Asha-Vahis : And now, — King Vishtaspa of Kayani Dynasty, — Prepare thyself for the Heavenly flight (offers Vishtaspa a golden cup). Quaff this drink from the fountain of Life, and thy soul shall be transported — for a vision of Heaven. (Vishtaspa drinks from the cup, sits down in his chair and gradually falls asleep. Soft music is heard and a golden chariot with four prancing horses appears on one side in the background).

Burzin : (Approaches the throne and holds out his hand to King's soul which is standing beside the sleeping King.)

Come Vishtaspa ; — thy journey begins. (He walks towards the chariot holding the soul's hand. The whole assembly, turns to look at Burzin, walking towards the chariot. They are amazed and aghast).

King's Soul : (In a trembling voice) This cohort in purple and gold — Is-it-for-me ?

Burzin : Ay Vishtaspa ; — lift thyself into the chariot. (pause)

K's soul : And who shalt hold the reins, to control these prancing horses ?

Burzin : Thyself shalt drive them. They shall carry thee to the gates of Heaven. (The horses take a start, soft music)

K's soul : Tarry Kind Spirit. My soul is trembling ! (The chariot takes speed through the atmosphere, into

the kingdom of Stars. In the back-ground, tinsels and stars are lowered to show the kingdom of Stars, Voices of Heaven are heard)

Heavenly Hail Kai-Vishtaspa, — defender of Truth ;

Voices : Enter the Gates of Heaven.

Welcome to the realm of Eternal Light.

Hail, Hail Vishtaspa, — Shah-in-Shah of Iran,

Come to the abode of celestial songs.

Thy deeds on Earth are glorified.

Thou shalt ever live, in the hearts of thy countrymen.

Hail to thee Vishtaspa, — Zarathustra's true friend.

Thy place is among the Yezatas.

Hail, Hail, Vishtaspa, — lover of mankind,

Thy seat is with the Yezatas, . .

Blessed Shah of Iran, Hail, hail, hail.

(music dies out. Long pause).

(on the stage, Vishtaspa slowly awakes)

(Pause)

King Vis : (After a pause) Zarathustra, (pause)

Where was I ? (Looks around). Into the kingdom of Bliss. I had flown — through the mists of the Earth — Into the realms of stars ! (pause) That dazzling effulgence ! (pause) Those celestial voices ! — (pause) where are they ? (pause) That peace and harmony, — no human being has known ! Yes, IT WAS HEAVEN ! (Happily) and I am ranked with the holy Yezatas ! (enthused) Zarathustra, verily thou art God's beloved, — (pause) and my heart is with thee.

Zarath : And Vishtaspa of Iran, — did you face the Almighty ?

King : Ay, Zarathustra ; — He was truly majestic ! Almighty God was full of Lustre, full of Grace,

Angel of all angels ! The Shah of Iran looked a beggar before Him !

Zarath : Vishtaspa, thy desire is fulfilled. May the Mazda-Yesna Deen increase in its Lustre and grace.

(The Curtain)

A Narrator comes out to recite the Epilogue.

Epilogue

Narrator : This is a tale eight thousand years old,
When the Aryans were drawn into
Zarathustra's fold.
When men probed deep into Spiritual treasures,
They had hardly time for worldly pleasures.
Zarathustra's religion took lustre and fame,
And Iran was proud of Zarathustra's name.
Today that blaze is reduced to embers,
Behold Its dying gasps and falling members.
Wake up Zoroastrians, — Rekindle that flame !
Fan it, and fawn it — Its brilliance proclaim.
Take up the cudgels, and fight for 'Ashem',
Teach all tender shoots, to sing Zarathustra's fame